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Expert: Not ma's signature in deed



By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A handwriting expert from Hawaii who was earlier involved in the Barack Obama birth certificate saga testified in court yesterday that the signature in a deed of gift of land to Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) does not match his mother's other signatures.

In the ongoing bench trial of the lawsuit filed by the senator against his siblings over a piece of land on

Upper Capital Hill, Reed Hayes said that, based on his analysis, the ques-

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Handwriting expert Reed Hayes walks to the Superior Court courtroom yesterday afternoon to resume his testimony in the ongoing bench trial of Sen. Paul A. Manglona's lawsuit against his siblings over a piece of land. Hayes, who was involved in the Barack Obama birth certificate saga, testified that it was not the signature of Manglona's late mother, Bernadita, in the purported deed of gift for the land.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Navy rescues 3 adrift in Pacific for 8 days

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The U.S. Navy said it rescued three fishermen Tuesday who were adrift on a boat in the Pacific Ocean for eight days.

The men were reported missing Feb. 12 after failing to return from a fishing trip in Micronesia, the Navy said. The men had food and water aboard their 19-foot skiff but no safety equipment or radios.

The U.S. Coast Guard based in Guam searched for the men for several days before calling in a Navy

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ENVIRONMENT

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LIFE & STYLE

"Black Panther" sets a record with its \$235 million debut at the top of the U.S. box office.

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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

2 arrested in separate domestic violence incidents

Two men were arrested in separate domestic violence incidents on Saipan last Saturday and Monday.

Nathan Mario Aguon Roppul, 28, was apprehended for assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Gregory Vincent Cabrera Cing, 35, was arrested for two counts of assault and battery and one count of child abuse.

Police said that Roppul's wife was crying and feared for her and her child's life as her husband has two previous cas-

es of domestic violence and is still on probation.

In Cing's case, a responding police officer said that the wife and her 9-year-old daughter were seen crying while walking away from their house.

At hearings last Tuesday before Superior Court associate judges Teresa Kim-Tenorio and Joseph N. Camacho, a \$10,000 cash bail was imposed on Roppul, while Cing was allowed to post a \$1,000 cash bail and \$9,000 unsecured bond.

In Roppul's case, police re-

sponded to a home in Gualo Rai last Saturday at 10:28pm after receiving a call from a woman who reported that her husband beat her up. The alleged victim told police that Roppul got angry after she called her mother to babysit her 8-month-old child. Roppul allegedly kicked her thrice in the stomach and slammed a car door twice against her back.

In Cing's case, a 9-year-old girl called the police last Monday at 12:19am at her mother's instruction because

of the beating.

The wife told police that she and Cing were arguing about the domestic violence complaint she had previously filed that led to Cing's arrest.

Cing told her to leave the house with their daughter. As the wife was leaving,

Cing pushed her, causing her to fall. Cing then allegedly grabbed her left leg and twisted it. She instructed their daughter to call the police. He then allegedly kicked her on the left inner thigh.

Upon the police's arrival, Cing threatened to jump from

the house's second-floor balcony if the officers do not leave. After several hours, police arrested Cing at 3am.

Last Feb. 12 at 12:22am, police officers were also dispatched to a reported domestic violence involving Cing.

(*Ferdie De La Torre*)

Landowner sues rental car company for allegedly encroaching on property

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A landowner is suing the company that owns a rental car business in Garapan that used to lease his property, for allegedly encroaching on the property and causing the new lessee to withhold the remaining lease payment of \$1.1 million.

Jesus T. Guerrero is suing Ju & Han Corp., owner of Asia Rent-A-Car, for trespass, encroachment, intentional interference with contract, and Zoning Code violation.

Guerrero is demanding damages, court costs, and attorney's fees. He is represented in the case by Charles P. Reyes Jr.

Guerrero wants the court to issue a permanent injunction preventing the company from trespassing on, removing, and converting his property.

When contacted yesterday for comments, a Ju and Han Corp. representative said they already have a lawyer in the case.

According to Reyes in the complaint, Guerrero is the fee simple owner of a

1,307-square-meter property in Garapan. In 1992, Guerrero leased his property to Insurance and Business Management Corp., owner of Marianas International Travel Agency, an entity owned and controlled by his brother Juan, for a 25-year period.

MITA Travel then assigned the lot to Juan, who, in turn, assigned his interest in that lease to Juan T. Guerrero & Associates Inc., which owns Isla Realty Management.

In 1995, Juan T. Guerrero & Associates Inc. leased a portion of the lot (100 square meters) to Ju and Han Corp. and then renewed that lease several times.

On Dec. 4, 2007, the lawyer said, Ju & Han Corp. entered into a lease agreement with the Department of Public Lands for an 11-square-meter public property adjacent to Guerrero's lot.

In April 2017, Juan T. Guerrero and Associates terminated its lease with Ju & Han effective Aug. 15, 2017.

Reyes said Guerrero paid Juan \$300,000 to terminate all of his company's lease agree-

ments on the lot, vacate the premises, evict all tenants, including Ju & Han, and deliver the premises to a new lessee, De En International LLC.

Guerrero entered into a lease agreement with De En International LLC for the lot on Aug. 15, 2017.

The lease agreement, Reyes said, required De En International LLC to pay Guerrero a total of \$3.1 million.

Guerrero received \$2 million and was to receive the remaining \$1.1 million by Aug. 29, 2017.

However, Reyes said, Ju & Han did not immediately vacate the premises when the lease expired on Aug. 15, 2017. Instead, it only vacated the spot on Sept. 8, 2017.

Reyes said that when Guerrero inspected the space, he noticed that the defendant damaged his property and removed a glass door and some other related office building materials.

Reyes said the defendant right now operates its vehicle rental business partially on public land and partially on the plaintiff's property.



NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres delivers his opening remarks at the inaugural meeting of the new Commonwealth Planning and Development Advisory Council on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018. The council will provide policy direction for the new Office of Planning and Development, which will create the CNMI's first comprehensive sustainable development plan. **See related story on Page 6**

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

RESIDENTIAL, GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS DISCONNECTION NOTICE

IT&E would like to remind its customers that all current and outstanding billing of accounts are due on or before **Thursday February 22, 2018**. Payment not received by close of business on **Thursday February 22, 2018** will result in temporary suspension of all services after 6 p.m.

To avoid any service interruption, customers are hereby advised to kindly remit payment for their billing on or before **Thursday February 22, 2018**.

Any disputed charges must be brought to IT&E's attention either in writing or in person to the IT&E Chalan Lalau Store by 5 p.m. on **February 22, 2018**. Any undisputed amounts must still be paid to avoid temporary suspension of services.

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Special Meeting Announcement

When: Saturday, February 24, 2018
Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 pm
Location: Herman's Modern Bakery Conference Room

Agenda

1. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum
2. Review and Adoption of Agenda
3. Review and Adoption of Minutes - None
4. Public Comments (5 Minutes per Commenter)
5. New Business
 - a. Proposed By-Laws
 - b. Proposed 2018 Modifications to the Unified State Plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
 - c. Proposed Policy and Operations Manual
 - d. Public Hearing and Submission Period
6. Executive Session
7. Next Meeting
8. Adjournment

Approved by:
/s/ Josephine DLG. Mesta
Chair, SWDB

Aging Office completes national report

Three years since the first successful completion and certification of the 2015 National Aging Program Information System State Program report, Office of Aging director Walter Manglona said the division has renewed, completed, and submitted the report for the NAPIS this year.

NAPIS is a state reporting tool that the Administration for Community Living-Administration on Aging uses to monitor performance and collect information on the Older Americans Act. State agencies on aging are required to provide detailed information on OAA program participants, services, and expenditures annually by submitting comprehensive state program reports.

These reports help in furthering the vision for the elderly," said Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Robert Hunter.

That vision allows the elderly an opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of society and community life and be continuously productive, be able to maintain their health and independence for as long as time allows, and remain in their own homes and communities for as long as possible without the isolation of life in institutions such as nursing homes.

Manglona said the Office on Aging also completed its report on the Nutrition Service Incentive Program.

"[NSIS] has been a consistent part of assisting our *man'amko*. It is important to note that the NSIP meal count data...is a key factor in calculating state, territory, and tribal organization's...grant allocations. ...Currently, our division is expanding services to the elderly at home and their caregivers, introducing new activities to our *man'amko*, working on some building repairs, welcoming more clients, improving our daily supportive services, and building capacity with Rota and Tinian and addressing challenges within the program," Manglona said.

The division is now awaiting the issuance of the Variance Report Justification for ACL's review.

"The NSIP further provides support grants to states, territories, and eligible tribal organizations to support the Congregate and Home-Delivered Nutrition Programs by providing an incentive to serve more meals. Through this funding

opportunity, we are able to receive a grant as cash, commodities, or a combination of cash and commodities. With

this, we look forward to continuing to enhance our services to our *man'amko* and the community," Manglona said.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres noted that the division has maintained a high performance. "We've seen a steady

rise of active *man'amko* in our centers. The Aging Office has played a key role in serving thousands of meals

as part of their nutrition program and has been a strong advocate for the needs of our elderly." (PR)



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Express Financial celebrates 5 years

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Express Financial is celebrating its fifth year of service on Saipan today. To express its gratitude to its consumers, the company will be giving out

\$500 to a lucky raffle winner. The winner may be a consumer of the establishment's services or any community member.

According to Express Financial area manager James Matsumoto, throughout the

entire day today, Express Financial will be serving refreshments to customers and community members.

While taking advantage of the free refreshments, individuals may fill out application forms to enter the raffle

drawing. At the end of the day, Express Financial will draw the lucky winner.

Matsumoto said that Express Financial president Robert Chappel has travelled all the way from Atlanta to take part in the

company's fifth anniversary on Saipan.

Everyone is invited to cel-

lbrate Express Financial's anniversary today at its office from 8am to 4pm.

Vaccination campaign ends next week

By BEA CABRERA
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REPORTER

The CNMI Division of Public Health Immunization Program is finishing up its vaccination campaign in clinics, public and private school, and day care centers. The program was set from Jan. 22 to March 1, 2018.

The schools that participated in the program are Mt. Carmel School; Marianas, Kagman, and Saipan Southern high schools; Francisco M. Sablan, Tanapag, Dandan, Hopwood, and Chacha middle schools; and William S. Reyes, Koblerville, Gregorio T. Camacho, Garapan, San Vicente, and Oleai elementary schools.

According to Immunization Program manager Jeremy Sasamoto of the Communicable Disease Bureau of the Division of Public Health, they brought the campaign to schools to make it easier for parents to get their children vaccinated.

"Immunization is required for school attendance and we go to schools to help parents who have difficulties coming to one of our clinics. We typi-

cally start our school vaccination campaign by meeting with the Education commissioner and all the principals of our public and private schools," he said.

"Working with our school partners, we come up with a schedule for our visits and we provide a letter to parents indicating that their child is not up-to-date with required immunizations. The letters, which contain a consent form, are distributed at school and all signed consent forms are collected prior to our visit to the school," he added.

With over 1,000 children still in need of vaccination, a second round of vaccination took place.

"We began our school vaccination campaign for the 2017-2018 school year in October and we concluded in December. However, due to the significant number of children who were still not up-to-date with required immunizations, I decided to conduct a second round of on-campus vaccinations to give a second opportunity for parents to get their children vaccinated in

school," he said. "We've never done a second round of on-campus vaccinations before and we're working closely with our partners in health at the Public School System and our private schools to make this second round successful," he added.

Sasamoto said the vaccination program is based on Public Law 6-10, which requires all children be up-to-date with required immunizations prior to enrollment in any school or daycare/childcare facility in the CNMI.

"The law also states that a valid health certificate must be presented upon enrollment and registration at any school or daycare as this provides evidence that the child is up-to-date with required immunizations and free from communicable diseases. These health certificates must also be maintained on site at the school or daycare where the child is enrolled, ready for inspection," he said.

"All students who are delinquent or not up-to-date with required immunizations will be given a notice and remedial action must be taken

within two weeks of receiving our notice. Failure to do so risks having the child suspended from school until all immunization requirements are met," he added.

Sasamoto said that suspending children without health certificates from school is the absolute last thing that the division would want to do.

"We don't want to resort to suspension and keep the child away from school but it's the law and we are tasked to enforce these public health laws. I want to say that these laws are not a barrier to getting an education, they are intended to protect our community, especially our children, from communicable diseases," he said.

He said the job of the Immunization Program is to prevent the introduction and spread of vaccine preventable communicable diseases in the Commonwealth.

"We constantly work...to ensure our community is protected from terrible diseases, some of which are currently causing outbreaks on islands and territories close to the CNMI," he said.

Islandwide water outage on Tinian

There will be a scheduled water service interruption on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018, from 8am to 2pm for the entire island of Tinian.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will replace

an existing non-working 8-inch gate valve, which will isolate the old water tank from the newly constructed half-million tank. As a result of the replacement, CUC will be able to

supply extra volume of water to the island.

This project is funded by the Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs through the CNMI CIP office and the Mayor of Tin-

ed 4,181-square-meter property, wants the court to declare him the owner of the property by virtue of the 1985 deed of gift. Their mother, Bernardita, is already deceased.

Torres and Thomas Manglona, co-administrators of the Bernardita estate, asserted that their brother, Paul Manglona, does not entirely inherit the disputed land as their mother's signature in the document had been forged.

Hayes testified that he came to his conclusion based on the totality of the 18 sample signatures of Bernardita that he reviewed. The samples, called exemplars, are apparently known signatures that Bernardita made from 1984 to 2008.

Hayes agreed during cross-examination that some illnesses could change a per-

son's signature.

Paul Manglona is represented in the case by Rene Holmes and Mark Scoggins.

The Manglona siblings are represented by Samuel Mok.

Mok objected when Holmes asked about Hayes' involvement in the Obama birth certificate controversy, but he was overruled by judge pro tem David A. Wiseman, who is presiding over the trial.

Hayes recounted that he was tasked by the Maricopa County volunteer group Cold Case Posse to look at the electronic PDF image of Obama's long form birth certificate. Hayes said he evaluated the authenticity of the PDF version of the Obama "certificate of live birth" that was released by the White House and posted on the White

House website in April 2011.

Hayes said he posted an article online in August 2016 about the Obama birth certificate issue because of false information spreading in the internet.

Hayes said he only examined the PDF document itself and not the original birth certificate. In the article Hayes wrote that there are indications that the certificate of live birth released by the White House in 2011 may be a manufactured document or perhaps even an outright forgery. He, however, emphasized that without examining the original document housed at the Hawaii Department of Health, there can be no absolute certainty.

The trial will resume at 8:30am today, Thursday.

EXPERT

From Page 1

tioned signature of Paul Manglona's late mother, Bernardita, does not match her 18 known exemplar signatures.

Hayes is the expert witness of Paul Manglona's siblings, Priscilla M. Torres and Thomas A. Manglona, who are among the siblings the senator is suing over the property.

Hayes said that, in his opinion, Bernardita did not sign the purported deed of gift dated July 11, 1985, that gave the property solely to Sen. Paul Manglona.

"I'm absolutely certain," he said about his findings.

Paul Manglona, who is also suing Associate Justice John A. Manglona over the disput-

KILILI

From Page 1

personal conversations with several members of the congressional working group tasked to study the extension of the CW program, the *Bloomberg Businessweek* article, "A Chinese Casino Has Conquered a Piece of America," could not affect the decision making on the transitional period extension.

"I would say at this time—with caution—that I don't think [the Bloomberg article] would affect [the U.S. Congress' decision on S.2325], but that is just my own personal observation, based on personal conversations I've had, not on any official positions," said Sablan.

S. 2325 is the product of U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), leader of the congressional working group and the chairperson for the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. Murkowski's working group includes several key congressmen and senators as well as Sablan and Torres.

Sablan said that some of the members of the working group have some understanding of the issues of the CNMI since they have been

involved with the group last summer.

Still, Sablan believes federal and local investigations must be held.

"It's important I think that federal and [local] authorities look closely into this article and some of the allegations made in there, because the people of the Marianas deserve to know the truth," he said, reiterating the seriousness of the allegations raised by the article.

The Bloomberg piece alleged that Torres and several of his family members have received money in exchange for favors for casino operator, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC.

IPI is the company that was awarded the sole casino licensee in the CNMI, and, since opening, claims to have raked in over six times more cash than the palatial casinos in Macau.

"There are some serious allegations there, of violations of law, but having said that, the people of the Marianas need to know the truth and it's also important to give the governor and his family the full opportunity to clear their names," Sablan said. "I don't want to have another Tinian Dynasty here in the middle of Saipan."

NAVY

From Page 1

team from Japan, who used a Poseidon plane equipped with advanced radar to find the boat within three hours.

The Navy said they dropped a kit to the boat containing food, water, medicine and communications equipment before a nearby police boat picked up the fishermen a few hours later.

"It was incredibly rewarding to be a part of saving

lives—it's what everyone joins the Navy to do," said Lt. Miles Schumacher, the tactical coordinator of the Patrol Squadron Eight aircrew.

Schumacher said in a statement that the P-8A Poseidon aircraft had enabled a "massive step forward" in the ability of search and rescue teams to search large areas quickly and effectively, even in the farthest corners of the globe.

Micronesia is about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to Indonesia, and is home to about 100,000 people.

AUTHORITIES

From Page 1

Saipan Tribune learned that a lawyer has filed a motion requesting the Superior Court to unseal the search warrant that a police sergeant obtained from Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio last Saturday.

Police, backed by Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, served the search warrant last Saturday at the house of the late Ana Crisostomo and Calistro Crisostomo.

Authorities used a backhoe,

among other tools, to dig at the back of the house, but the family reportedly disclosed that no remains were found.

The police sergeant reportedly stated in the search warrant that "there is being concealed or buried within the ground human remains believed to be of the missing Luhk sisters, Faloma and Maleina."

This coming May 25 marks the seventh year of the mysterious disappearance of the Luhk sisters near a public school bus pavilion in As Teo, with still no trace of the children.

 **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**
SHEFA deadline

The deadline to submit supporting documents for Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance applications is on Feb. 28, 2018. All documents must be complete before submission. Office hours is from 7:30am to 4:30pm. (PR)

Free workshop on CNMI tax obligations

The CNMI Division of Revenue & Taxation will be conducting a free small business development workshops today, Feb. 22, at the CDA boardroom in San Jose, from 8:30am to 10:30am. The training is designed to help small businesses in the CNMI comply with the state's basic tax and licensing requirements. In addition to describing the types of licenses and taxes that are applicable in the CNMI, a few other agencies impose taxes and require licenses are identified. This training will discuss tax requirements and compliance administered by the CNMI Department of Finance. Limited seating. Register now at: pisbdcn.ecenterdirect.com. For more information or to reserve your seats today, contact the CNMI SBDC at 670-664-3018 or visit www.pacificsbdc.com. (PR)

Scheduled power outage today

There will be a scheduled power interruption today, Feb. 22, 2018, from 3pm to 6pm to allow the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. line crew to perform maintenance on the power distribution system along Beach Road near Hong Ye Hardware in Chalan Kanoa.

The Kiya 4 (2nd partial) covering the area in Susupe from the Arizona building south to Chalan Kanoa near the M.S. Villagomez building will be affected.

No water well will be affected but the A-5 and A-9 wastewater lift stations will be affected. The traffic light in Susupe (near the cathedral) will be affected. (PR)

DOL clinic for CNMI businesses today

The CNMI Department of Labor will be holding a clinic for CNMI businesses today, Feb. 22, 2018, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center. Registration starts at 8am and the clinic begins at 9am. Clinic ends at noon. The topics will include Employment and Training Services, Job Vacancy Announcements Guideline, CW-1 Transitional Worker Update, Occupational Safety Health Act, and Workforce Investment Opportunity Act.

Contact Barbara T. Sablan (bsablandol@gmail.com), Eugene Tebuteb (etebuteb.dol@gmail.com), Gil San Nicolas (gsanicolasdol@gmail.com), or call 664-3196 / 3197 or 664-3190 or 322-4365. (PR)

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CNMI sustainable development plan in the works

The Commonwealth Planning and Development Advisory Council convened its inaugural meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018, for the creation of the CNMI's first comprehensive sustainable development plan.

Established by Public Law 20-20, the advisory council provides policy direction for the new Office of Planning and Development, which will be led by its director, Kodep Ogumoro-Uludong.

Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres appointed Ogumoro Uludong on Jan. 8, 2018, and has since initiated the office's mission of providing short and long-range guidance for economic, infrastructural, and physical development for the CNMI.

A former project manager for the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance, Ogumoro-Uludong holds a bachelor's degree in Political Science from the Uni-

versity of Southern California and a master's degree in Communication from the University of Texas, El Paso.

He also held a fellowship in conservation under Rare (www.rare.org) and completed a Pacific Island Community Adaptive Co-Management Course at the University of South Pacific in Fiji.

Presently, he also serves as a director for the Commonwealth Development Authority and the Northern Marianas Housing Corp.

"The mission of the Office of Planning and Development is to establish development objectives, standards, and principles for our islands' desired land use for residential, recreational, agricultural, commercial, and industrial needs. As outlined in Public Law 20-20, the goal of this office and this advisory council

is an enormous task, but it is also a rewarding undertaking. With community engagement and the resources, we can tangibly set the course for development in the CNMI that is consistent with the proper protection of our environment and historical heritage," Ogu-moro-Uludong said.

Per P.L. 20-20, the advisory council consists of the: Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, Department of Public Works, Department of Public Lands, Department of Lands and Natural Resources, Department of Commerce, Commonwealth Zoning Office, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., Marianas Visitors Authority, Office of the Mayor of Rota, Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan, Office of the Mayor of Saipan, Office of the Mayor of the Northern Islands, Saipan Chamber of

Commerce, and Governor's Strategic Economic Development Council.

At the inaugural meeting, members unanimously voted to include the Department of Labor, the CNMI Public School System, the Northern Marianas College, and the Northern Marianas Trades Institute to include policy discussions on U.S. workforce development. The council elected Commerce Secretary Mark O. Rabauliman to serve as its chairman.

Torres noted that the council is an impressive composition of individuals with a desire to create a development plan that advocates for environmental protection, sustainability, and infrastructure effectiveness.

"With the surge of economic development in the CNMI over the last couple of years, it has been a goal of mine and the Legislature to properly plan out a sustainable path to

prosperity on all three islands moving forward. We all want to ensure that we have the infrastructure put in place to accommodate the existing developments, but we must also advocate for our cultural preservation and environmental stewardship. The creation of this long-term plan takes all of us, and we are looking forward to the policy discussions between our government, our private sector, and other community groups," Torres added.

Elements of the comprehensive sustainable development plan include land use, community design, transportation, regulations, public facilities, public lands, housing, redevelopment, conservation, recreation, safety, tourism, development policy, capital improvements, labor and workforce development, and best practices (from other jurisdictions).

Senate President Arnold I. Palacios, who authored P.L.

20-20, added that the plan is to define what is sustainable growth and to ensure that agencies are communicating with one another.

"Over the last several years, the governor, the Legislature, and I have conversations with our constituencies to ensure that our infrastructure will be ready for these new developments, and our community has every right to know where we stand. It is that very reason that I drafted this law to create the planning office to properly plan for our future. Not only do we need a master plan, but we need to increase the effectiveness of government and private actions and improve the coordination among the different agencies. Ultimately, we must leverage our resources to guide the future development of the CNMI in a sustainable manner that benefits every single person that call these islands home," Palacios said. (PR)



INVITATION FOR BIDS DPW-18-IFB-010

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CANINE KENNEL FACILITY FOR THE DIVISION OF CUSTOMS SERVICES DANDAN, SAIPAN

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for Construction of New Canine Kennel Facility for the Division of Customs Services Dandan, Saipan Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after **February 15, 2018** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations currently in effect."

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **March 6, 2018**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the project site, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **March 13, 2018** to **Ms. Crystal C. Cabrera, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Ms. Crystal C. Cabrera, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date or each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) Calendar days before the scheduled bid opening.**

Sealed bids must be marked "DPW-18-IFB-010". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time March 16, 2018**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, March 16, 2018**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 16, 2018** and the BID documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **March 28, 2018**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m. local time, April 2, 2018**. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:00 a.m. local time, on March 16, 2018**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety requiring approval of the Attorney General must be pre-approved prior to bid submission.** Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations **\$70-30.3-245**. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:

- 1) Cash
- 2) US Gov't Securities
- 3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
- 4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
- 5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **One Hundred Twenty (120) working days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed at the rate of **One Hundred (US\$100.00)** for each and every day the work is delayed beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



INVITATION FOR BIDS DPW-18-IFB-011

RENOVATION OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE NO. 1223-CNMI WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for **Renovation of Government House No. 1223-CNMI Women's Association Capitol Hill**, Saipan Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after **February 22, 2018** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations currently in effect."

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **March 13, 2018**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the project site, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **March 21, 2018** to **Ms. Crystal C. Cabrera, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Ms. Crystal C. Cabrera, Acting Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) Calendar days before the scheduled bid opening.**

Sealed bids must be marked "DPW-18-IFB-011". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time March 29, 2018**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, March 29, 2018**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 29, 2018** and the BID documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **April 9, 2018**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at **10:30 a.m. local time, April 12, 2018**. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m. local time, on March 29, 2018**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety requiring approval of the Attorney General must be pre-approved prior to bid submission.** Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations **\$70-30.3-245**. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:

- 1) Cash
- 2) US Gov't Securities
- 3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
- 4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
- 5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **One Hundred Twenty (120) working calendar days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed at the rate of **One Hundred (US\$100.00)** for each and every day the work is delayed beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Over 100 NMI homes, biz could get high-speed internet

» Locations eligible for support from FCC's Connect America Fund this summer

WASHINGTON—Over 100 rural homes and businesses in Northern Mariana Islands that are currently unserved by high-speed Internet service could get connectivity in the near future.

These homes and businesses are in unserved areas of Northern Mariana Islands eligible for financial support from the next phase of Federal Communication Commission's Connect America Fund, which

helps offset the high cost of extending broadband service into rural areas. The FCC will be distributing these funds through an innovative "reverse auction," which is scheduled to launch on July 24.

"Connecting the unconnected in rural America is my top priority," said FCC chair Ajit Pai. "I'm excited that our CAF auction will provide opportunities for innovative

companies and cooperatives to bridge the digital divide for the Northern Mariana Islands consumers and small businesses that lack high-speed access today."

Nationwide, providers will compete for up to \$2 billion in support to expand access to broadband to nearly a million homes and locations in unserved rural areas over the next decade. The auction will

provide opportunities for new entrants to the marketplace, regardless of technology, including phone companies, fixed wireless service providers, satellite providers, cable companies and electric utility broadband providers.

By harnessing market forces, the auction is designed to provide consumers with high-quality, broadband service in an efficient, cost-effective way. The application period for providers seeking to partic-

ipate in the auction runs from March 19 to March 30.

Broadband access is essential in the 21st century for jobs, education, information and economic development.

Since 2011, the FCC has targeted more than \$9 billion in support for rural broadband expansion to over 4 million homes and small businesses through its Connect America Fund. For more information on the Connect America Fund Phase II auction.

According to a chart showing Northern Mariana Islands counties with areas eligible for support from the auction, along with the number of homes and businesses (locations), 83 sites on Rota will be qualified for the FCC program, while two will be qualified on Saipan and 21 on Tinian.

For more information on the Connect America Fund Phase II auction, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/connect-america-fund-phase-ii-auction>. (PR)

IPI employee sues bank owner over alleged hot coffee injury

An employee of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is suing the owner of Bank of Guam over alleged injuries he suffered when the bank's building in Garapan caused him to spill the hot coffee he was holding on his hand.

Randyl W. Kruid, through counsel Bruce Berline, is suing BankGuam Holding Co. in federal court for negligence. He wants BankGuam Holding held liable to pay him damages in an amount to be proven at trial.

As of press time Wednesday, *Saipan Tribune* was still trying to obtain comments from BankGuam Holding.

Imperial Pacific offices are located on the fourth floor of the Bank of Guam building in

Garapan where the company holds trainings.

According to Berline in the complaint filed Wednesday, Kruid, a resident of South Dakota, worked in Imperial Pacific's offices. Last Nov. 22, Kruid arrived at the Bank of Guam building for work early in the morning and, as usual, took the stairs up to his fourth-floor office.

Berline said that after arriving at his office, Kruid realized that he had to return to his vehicle to retrieve his computer.

Berline said that, with a hot cup of coffee in his hand, the plaintiff walked down the stairs to the parking lot where his vehicle was parked and retrieved his laptop. (Ferdie de la Torre)

Kruid then got on the building's elevator and pushed the button to ascend to the fourth floor. Once the elevator doors closed and the elevator began ascending, it allegedly unexpectedly started to violently shake and shudder.

Berline said the elevator's sudden shaking and shuddering was so violent that it caused the hot coffee to spill on the back of Kruid's left hand.

He said Kruid's hand was burned and required medical attention.

Berline said BankGuam Holding and its agents failed to properly inspect or maintain the elevator so that it was in a safe and proper operating condition. (Ferdie de la Torre)

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The CNMI Family Planning Program is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Population Affairs, Title X

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US Coral Reef Task Force to focus on conservation

WASHINGTON—The Department of the Interior and the Department of Commerce, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, will host the 39th biannual meeting of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force this week.

The public business meeting will be held on Feb. 22, 2018, at the Interior headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Douglas Domenech, Interior assistant secretary Insular and International Affairs, and W. Russell Callender, Ph.D., assistant NOAA ad-

ministrator for the National Ocean Service, will co-chair the business meeting.

The meeting will emphasize the importance of coral reef conservation, focus on the impacts of recent natural disasters on coral reefs, explore cutting-edge research

in natural disaster recovery and resilience of coral reefs and highlight plans for 2018 as the "International Year of the Reef."

The U.S. Coral Reef Task Force includes leaders of 12 federal agencies with coral reef responsibilities; the U.S.

territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico; the U.S. states of Hawaii and Florida; and the three freely associated states of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, and Palau.

The task force was cre-

ated by Executive Order 13089. Its primary mission is to promote the conservation and sustainable use of coral reefs globally. The USCRTF also helps build partnerships, strategies, and support for on-the-ground action to conserve coral reefs. (PR)

The Shack donates nearly \$3K to NMC golf tourney

In support of higher education, The Shack recently donated close to \$3,000 in in-kind contributions for NMC's Annual Golf Tournament.

The 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open golf tournament is scheduled for Satur-

day, March 3, 2018. The event will be the first major golf tournament of the year.

"The people in our local community are so important to us and we know that supporting NMC's annual Golf Tournament contributes to



The Shack recently donated close to \$3,000 in gift certificates to Northern Marianas College in support of the annual NMC Foundation Golf Tournament that will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018.

a great and bigger picture," said The Shack owner Glen Hunter. "Like previous years before, we want to do what we can to help make NMC's Golf Tournament amazing."

"The Shack has supported the college in many events beyond the golf tournament and we are always grateful for the relationship we have with them," said NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez.

The golf tournament is the NMC Foundation's signature event that raises funds to support NMC's academic programs and services.

"It's important to us to bring in our local food vendors, so

we are excited to offer all the gift certificates as raffle prizes at the Golf Tournament," said Mary Tenorio, NMC Foundation board chair. "We are grateful for their continued support."

The 15th Annual NMC Foundation Open golf tournament will be held at the Saipan LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort (west course). Showtime is at 6am and shotgun start will be at 7am. The tournament will follow a medal play format.

First place winners in the men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights will each receive \$500, while \$300 and \$200 will go to the second and third place finish-

ers, respectively.

Hole-in-one prizes include a 2017 Toyota Tacoma from Atkins Kroll Saipan, a 2017 Honda HR-V from Joeten Motors, \$10,000 in cash from Marianas Insurance Co., and \$5,000 in cash from Pacifica Insurance. The tournament will also feature many other items such as raffle prizes like smartphones, hotel stays, meal gift certificates, and much more.

Registration and payment can be made at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort or the NMC Cashier's Office. For sponsorship opportunities or registration information, visit marijanas.edu or call 237-6833. (NMC)

BankPacific promotes two

Two individuals have been promoted to executive positions at BankPacific.

Eduardo Salanatin Jr. has been promoted to BankPacific vice president, Commercial/Consumer & Indirect Financing.

Meriah Kaye Mantanona was promoted to Consumer & Indirect Financing manager.

Salanatin joined BankPacific in 2010. He graduated



Salanatin

Mantanona

Mantanona joined BankPacific in 2017. She graduated from the University of Guam where she received her bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing & Finance and Economics.

Philip J. Flores, president and board chairman, announced the new promotions yesterday. (Saipan Tribune)

CANCELLATION OF RFP MVA-RFP-18-2009

For: Local Publication and Media Services

This is to notify bidders and prospective bidders that **MVA-RFP-18-2009** has been cancelled in accordance with NMIAC § 90-20-301. MVA has determined that cancellation was in the best interests of MVA because inadequate specifications were contained in the solicitation. The RFP is cancelled and all proposals are hereby rejected.

MVA understands that firms went through great efforts in preparing a response for the above mentioned RFPs, and apologizes for any inconvenience this cancellation may have caused.

/s/ Gloria C. Cavanagh
Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director

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Saipan Tribune

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Do-nothing politicians on wrong side of gun reform battle

By JEREMY RING

Sun Sentinel



Jeremy Ring is a former Florida state senator, (D) 29th District. Ring is now running to serve as Florida's next chief financial officer.

As a statewide candidate for chief financial officer of Florida, I will be using much of my platform to call for sensible gun reform. I have a statewide voice and I plan on using it.

This one hit home. Marjory Stoneman Douglas is one mile from where I raise my children. I knew students and families affected by this senseless tragedy.

While school shootings are too common, they are never routine when they occur in your backyard. I, like others, am calling for a complete assault weapon ban along with more funding and services for mental health. Per our amazing Sheriff Scott Israel, we need to give law enforcement better tools to involuntarily hold for 72 hours persons who are believed to be a danger to society. I am calling on the federal government to reform our HIPPA laws so families who know that someone close to them is capable of such atrocity and can have access to medical records to alert law enforcement.

Beyond policy, I will call out every lawmaker who does nothing, repeats the BS line that it's to early to discuss changes, and only gives prayers without a concrete plan for solving this horrific epidemic.

Gov. Rick Scott, the next time you come to Parkland, have the guts to say you will do everything in your power to create laws that ban assault weapons. Sen. Marco Rubio, don't come to our community if you have the nerve to say that it's too early to speak about sensible gun reform. If you can't stand in front of the camera and tell us that you wholeheartedly support gun reform, then don't stand in front of that camera. Lastly, don't ever tell a community who has just lost so many of our best and brightest that creating new gun laws wouldn't have stopped the shooting.

I've watched the last few days as the student survivors have gone on national television with the kind of poise you can only dream of having and told the world that they want immediate action. They don't ever want to see another community go through what our community is going through now. They are true leaders and they WILL win this battle, and you Sen. Rubio and Gov. Scott, and any other politician who espouses inaction, will LOSE.

This is a war for the lives of our children and you are on the wrong side. Every other nation has figured this out. So will we. #DOSOMETHINGNOW



Americans increasingly unwilling to listen to experts

Americans increasingly deride experts, and reject expert advice because we equate expertise with elitism and snobbery. And yet we're lucky to live among them, even if we only tend to appreciate their advice when something goes wrong, at which point we have no choice but to depend on their knowledge.

The day after Christmas, I was standing in the rubble of what had once been my family room, looking up through a burned hole in the ceiling into my living room. I was in shock, as people always are after a traumatic event like the house fire that had driven me from my home, along with my wife and my cat.

Around me, groups of people were talking. There were firefighters, building inspectors, an electrician, a plumber, a contractor, even the town administrator. All of these professionals were speaking to each other about the damage and what needed to be done.

I didn't understand a word of it.

I felt completely helpless. I have a doctorate in international relations. I have written several books. My advice has been sought by politicians, government agencies, private industry and the media. I am a veteran teacher with awards for the quality of my instruction.

None of that mattered as I stood there, a ridiculous figure with my unwashed mop of hair, some sweat pants tucked into unlaced boots, shivering in a T-shirt under my heavy coat as the temperature plummeted and the acrid stink of smoke seeped into my clothes.

Mostly, I was in the way. At one point, one of the workers gently moved me a few feet away from the damage, because the remains of the fireplace and chimney I was gawking at might collapse on my head.

That's when I realized I was in the care of experts who were as good at their jobs as I was at mine. The plumber made sure the pipes were safe. The electrician made sure there was enough power to keep some heaters on in the face of a deep freeze, and then confidently dove into a tangle of burned wires I was certain no human being could fix. (I would rather have been looking at an ICBM. At least I know how those work.)

My house swarmed with people doing what they do best. More carpenters and electricians. Painters, a stonemason, debris removal specialists. They communicated fluently with each other in the language of house repair.

Most of them were happy to explain to me what they were doing, and I did my best to learn as much as I could. But sometimes, I was just lost. When a master electrician told me why my new outlets were safer than the old ones, I nodded politely until a nearby contractor overheard us and realized I couldn't keep up. They dumbed it down for me.

Each expert relied on another's set of skills: The plumber and

By TOM NICHOLS
Los Angeles Times

Tom Nichols is a professor at the Naval War College and Harvard Extension School, and the author of *The Death of Expertise*.



the electrician worked together to get the heat back on, while the carpenters and the mason made sure the new fireplace would hold. It was an ongoing illustration of the division of labor.

One day, towards the end of the repairs, one of the painters asked me my preference about something that I didn't understand. "Jim," I laughed, "if you want to know about nuclear weapons, I'm your man. If you're asking me about primers, I have no idea what you're talking about."

The painter chuckled, and then told me what he was going to do with my walls. Then he asked: "So ... what's going to happen with this thing with North Korea?"

For once I didn't feel bewildered. I gave him my best guess about how things might play out, trying to muster my skills as a teacher. He nodded, and went back to painting.

Asking questions of experts, whether painters or political scientists, is how we learn from each other. Most experts are happy to share their knowledge—if they're asked by people who care about the answers.

But too many Americans are unwilling to ask useful questions, or they resist answers that conflict with their preconceptions. They prefer instead to express strong views on anything from vaccines to foreign policy even if they lack basic knowledge about those subjects. Over half of the American public would support attacking North Korea; only about a third can even find it on a map. Similarly, a 2014 poll found that Americans who support U.S. military intervention in Ukraine are among the least likely to know where it is.

We will never know why the fireplace that started the fire was constructed so poorly. Over a half-century ago, someone who was supposed to be an expert either made a mistake, or cut a corner. Or maybe he just wasn't good at his job, and I was the last one to know it.

But when that one long-ago mistake nearly cost me everything, I was glad to be in the hands of people who were no less expert at their work than I am at mine. However satisfying it might be on occasion to hiss at "experts," none of us can live without them.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Physicians sue over monopolistic 'Maintenance of Certification'

Before 1990, American physicians who had completed three years or more of rigorous training in a specialty and passed an examination were awarded lifetime "board certification." The only exception was the family practice board, which has always issued only time-limited certificates. After 1990, all member boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties followed suit and the nightmare of Maintenance of Certification began for all board-certified physicians. This has proven to be a \$230-million windfall for the administrators of these boards. Strangely, any physician who was board-certified before 1990 was "grandfathered," exempt from this onerous requirement.

To continue to say they are board-certified, younger doctors must take the board exam over and over again, spending thousands of dollars for the review courses and the examination, and hundreds of hours away from patients and family. There are also now "practice modules" in which the boards' chosen experts try to dictate patient care. It is claimed to be "voluntary," but what if doctors elect not to do it?

My husband, John Eck, M.D., is a great doctor with unusual training and experience. But he is no longer allowed to practice at the hospital where he served for 26 years. He was board-certified in family medicine, and I in internal medicine.

In 1980, John's general surgery program had a "pyramid"

system. Each year, it started with 12 residents and narrowed down to four by the third year. Since John was in that group of four, his path to becoming a general surgeon seemed clear. In fact, he scored the highest grade among the four on his third-year surgery exam. But as he was finishing that third of the five-year program, John was told his contract would not be renewed. As he found out later, his spot was taken by the son of a well-connected professor.

We had a growing family and needed income, so he went to nearby Somerset Medical Center and worked as an assistant surgeon for several years. He assisted in all areas—orthopedics, neurosurgery, thoracic, and abdominal surgery. He had to dash into the hospital at all hours of the night to do emergency C-sections. He loved it but realized it would best to become board-certified in something. He chose family medicine, a field that suited him well. He was given only three months credit in the three-year family medicine program for his three years of surgical training, but swallowed his pride, excelled in the program, and became an extraordinarily well-rounded physician. Some of his family medicine professors had been his medical students while he was a surgical resident, and his knowledge was so valued that he was asked to teach students again. No one ever questioned his ability.

I became board-certified for life in internal medicine in 1985 and was thus "grandfathered," never having to participate in MOC.

In 1988, we started a multi-specialty private medical practice near where we had trained. Feeling as though he had been educated to the hilt with six years of formal post-medical school training, John never retook the family medicine boards. No one seemed to mind. Expending the time away from his practice and family seemed wasteful and costly. He never failed to keep up with continuing medical education as required for continued licensure. Our practice grew, and our patients were very loyal.

Around 2010, when he was renewing his Somerset Medical Center staff privileges, a secretary noticed that he had never

By ALIETA ECK
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Dr. Alieta Eck graduated from the Rutgers College of Pharmacy and the St. Louis University School of Medicine in St. Louis, MO. She studied Internal Medicine at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, NJ and has been in private practice with her husband, Dr. John Eck, MD in Piscataway, NJ since 1988. She has been involved in health care reform since residency.

recertified in family medicine. He argued that 26 years of an unblemished record, getting 50 credits of CME per year, and having no patient complaints should be enough to have his privileges continued. But the medical staff bylaws required "board certification," and his had expired. They refused to make an exception as most hospitals did.

As of 2011, John was no longer allowed to admit and care for his hospitalized patients. Some of his patients were heartbroken, as his skill and confident demeanor gave them comfort when they needed him to care for them in the hospital. One patient with a pneumothorax requiring a chest tube would have greatly benefitted from his management skills. I argued that he should at least be allowed to be my "physician's assistant," but this logic was not welcomed.

The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons has filed a lawsuit against ABMS, and JE is the cited example of the unthinking, abusive, and illogical requirement of MOC for physicians to serve their hospitalized patients or have their services covered by insurance. Why should the self-selected experts of ABMS have the sole authority to "certify" physician competence and deny patients access to their chosen doctor?

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE' BATBON' CONNOLLY

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Joey "Pepe" Batbon' Connolly is a retired teacher and poet living on Tinian who taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

Poetic Penance on Presidential Politics

I'm Not Giving Up Trump for Lent

Satiric sonnets about Pres. 45 are time well spent in fact they provide me with a sort of catharsis so I'm not giving up writing about Trump for Lent and will monitor his malignant metamorphosis. Its like the child who loves candy and cookies but says he'll give up licorice and fruit cake since he never eats either one of these and wants to continue his sweet tooth intake. We have all done it from time to time giving up something we don't care about as a poet I enjoy writing words that rhyme Donald Trump is a perfect target no doubt I'll continue dealing in derision during Lent about the tragic times of our 45th US president.

Days of Wrath Mueller on the Warpath

Latin language leads the way deconstructing the Dies Irae 45 says he'll meet Mueller, promises an oath he'll be taking "Quantus tremor est futurus" - How great will be the quaking How many careers thrown under the bus? "Quando judex est venturus" - When the judge will come Will Trump not remember and play dumb? "Cuncta stricte discussurus" - Investigating everything strictly Mueller wants questions answered explicitly and specifically "Judex ergo cum sedebit" - When therefore the Judge will sit guarantee he won't put up with 45's bulls... "Quidquid latet apparebit" - Whatever lies hidden will appear and 45 won't be grinning from ear to ear "Nil inultum remanebit" - nothing will remain unpunished and Mueller is nowhere near finished.

We won't be great, America, until we realize we're not

By BILLY MADDALON
THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

Please don't read this if you think reality sucks. You won't enjoy it.

Our history books teach us America was once the best in the world at virtually everything. True or not, we have always clung to a belief in "American exceptionalism"—that we're different, better, smarter, because God wants it to be that way. It's blatant national narcissism. To seem rather than to be. And it's slowly destroying our nation.

America's current reality is sobering: Our expensive health system is one of the worst underperformers in the industrialized world (17th out of 37); Our education system is one of the worst (25th out of 37); Our mental health systems are fragmented and underfunded, with an opioid epidemic raging out of control in our rural communities. We also are the most violent country in the industrialized world (with gun homicide rates that are 25 times higher than our peers).

Gun violence has become a metaphor, a symptom of a much more insidious problem. We've somehow convinced ourselves that this, like so many other issues, is just going to magically go away, that the gun violence on our streets and mass shootings in houses of worship, night clubs, theaters, universities, schools and malls is just some kind of phase we're going through.

All of these problems persist because we refuse to learn from what other countries have done to solve these same challenges.

Remember, we're different, better, smarter, we're exceptional. Screw the facts!

I've taught my children magic isn't real. I assure them we won't get magically better at anything. Only hard work and doing whatever is required makes things better. Reality, choices, hard work, all once bedrock American core values, have now been replaced by ideology, wishful thinking and hope.

Our nation has perfected the art of making excuses. Take the gun debate. Americans have more guns per capita than any other country and own nearly half of the guns in the entire world, even though we're only 5 percent of the population. Neither is necessarily a bad thing. Except then there's also that pesky fact about being, by far, the most violent country in the world, with 33,000 Americans killed by guns every year. Cause and effect? Nah, it's just a coincidence. Ignore the man behind the curtain. We got this.

Study after study has revealed that gun violence directly correlates with levels of education, poverty and access. And the small subset of mass shootings directly correlates with mental illness, isolation, despair and, you guessed it, access. Take it from someone who does "angry-young-man-with-low-self-esteem-and-mental-illness" for a living. We've parented 19 foster children, all of whom are poor, struggled with depression and despair and all of whom take powerful psychotropic medication. Seventeen of them would pass a background check and have legal access to guns. Do I have your attention now?

Unless our nation does something to fix what's broken, it won't magically go away. Our problems will continue to get worse unless the American people and our government acknowledge that we have serious structural, societal, socio-economic and regulatory problems.

We aren't what we claim to be nor what we all hoped we were. We have to confront the brutal facts. Until we do, "Make America Great Again" will just be synonymous with "Make America Bleed Again."

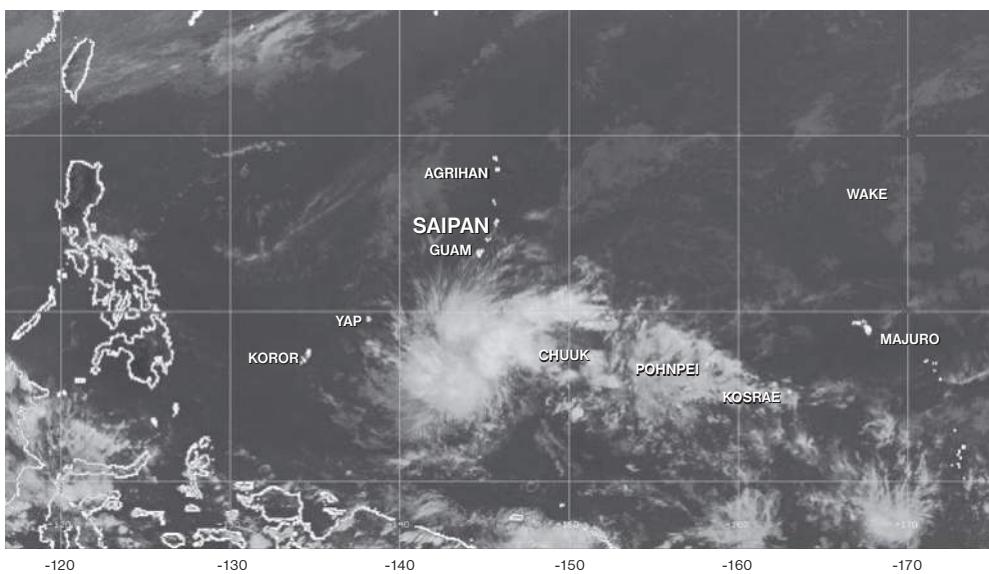
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.			

▲ 88°	▼ 76°	▲ 89°	▼ 77°	▲ 89°	▼ 78°	▲ 89°	▼ 77°	▲ 88°	▼ 77°
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YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:59 AM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A few changes made to the forecast. Did update winds with new model data. Models seem to be predicting winds higher than what observations currently show. Model data would suggest winds at or above 20 mph over the Marianas. Scatterometer data from last night did not show this high of wind speeds and depicted weather patterns would suggest little change today. Did low model winds and kept winds to between 15 and 20 mph. Clouds associated with the weak shear line has dissipated drier air filtering into the area will keep skies partly cloudy today and tonight. Trade-wind convergence will produce a return to mostly cloudy skies Thursday, which will continue through Thursday night. Deep layer moisture will be lacking so showers will remain isolated the next few days.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲	▼	°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorm	86°	/	77°
Palau	Thunderstorm	84°	/	77°
Yap	Thunderstorm	83°	/	79°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86°	/	80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorm	85°	/	79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	85°	/	79°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85°	/	79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲	▼	°F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	72°	/	63°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	52°	/	25°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	66°	/	63°
Honolulu	Thunderstorm	79°	/	71°
London	Partly Cloudy	45°	/	32°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	59°	/	42°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	91°	/	75°
Melbourne	Showers	88°	/	72°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	80°	/	74°
New York	Rain	47°	/	38°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	50°	/	37°
Paris	Sunny	43°	/	25°
Busan	Sunny	52°	/	36°
Rome	Showers	52°	/	39°
Salem	Thunderstorm	82°	/	60°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	50°	/	37°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	46°	/	21°
Tokyo	Showers	48°	/	34°
Washington, DC	Rain	54°	/	42°



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

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- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
5:46 AM	LOW TIDE	0.66
11:49 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.87
6:53 PM	LOW TIDE	0.29
-	-	-

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:38 AM	6:22 PM
Friday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Saturday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Sunday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Monday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	11:00 am	11:54 pm	-
Friday	11:48 am	-	-
Saturday	-	12:52 am	12:40 pm
Sunday	-	1:51 am	1:36 pm
Monday	-	2:52 am	2:36 pm

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily	UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily	UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota	UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6	UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily	UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily	UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)				GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7	UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)				ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN			
UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7	UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily	DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7	7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5	7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily	7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
UJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily	UJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)							

Tinian Hot Pepper Festival just keeps growing

The 14th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival held last weekend shows the event continues to grow in activities and participation.

The festival highlighted Tinian's famously potent *donni sali* pepper and was held at Tachogna Beach. With inter-island transportation provided by added commuter flights, a ferry, and traditional sailing canoe, along with a shuttle from the ports to the festival grounds, visitors found it easier than ever to participate in the event.

"Through the continued strong partnership of the Marianas Visitors Authority, Tinian Mayor's Office, Tinian Municipal Council, and the community, this year's festival was better than ever," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "In particular, we thank this year's Extreme Pika sponsors, Bridge Investment Group and IT&E, for providing the financial and in-kind support that allowed us to expand the event, offer great cash and phone prizes, and share the festival worldwide via on-site WiFi access."

Cory San Nicholas and Tina San Nicholas were crowned Hot Pepper Eating Contest king and queen for the men and women contests, respectively. Each were the first to polish off three pieces of mild peppers, followed by two pieces of hot *donni sali*, and topped by a bowl of soba with two tablespoons of ground *donni sali* mixed in.

In the JC Café Burger Eating Contest, Byron Dela Cruz was the first to finish a one-pound hamburger panted with ground *donni* and a side of fries sprinkled with *donni* powder.

Tina San Nicholas served up the best *kadun pika* (spicy stew) in beating last year's champion, Luis

Boys blow on their entries to coax them out of their shells for the *umang* hermit crab race at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach.



From right, Deenalih Crook, Amanda Haas, and a Tinian resident enjoy the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. The festival was held on Feb. 17-18, 2018, in honor of *donni sali*, the island's famous hot pepper. **MVA**



Tourists snorkel and watch outrigger canoe races at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**



Competitors in the Hot Pepper Eating Contest at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. Corey San Nicholas and Tina San Nicholas topped the event. **MVA**



Brandon Cepeda, left, and Jeddy Adriano lead their team in the boys' tug-of-war at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**

MVA



JC Café Team wins the outrigger canoe race at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**



Alex Harris of Georgia, right, and Dennis Borja, join the arm wrestling contest at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**



Mikicia Castro of Tinian prepares her entry for the *kadun pika* (spicy stew) contest at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**



The island's *donni sali* (hot pepper) was the star of the show at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 17-18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**



Tubera siblings, from left, Erica, Justin, and Lawrence, perform at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**



Island dish *kadun pika* (spicy stew) is served up for judges at the 2018 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 17-18, 2018, at Tachogna Beach. **MVA**

Mundu and Mikicia Castro, all Tinian residents.

For the first time, arm-wrestling was introduced to the festival lineup of contests. Alex Harris of Georgia good-naturedly agreed to use his left arm against southpaw Tinian native Dennis Borja. The title ultimately went to Benjamin Borja, who towered over both his opponents.

An outrigger canoe race pitted four teams against each other in the warm, turquoise water of Tachogna Beach. *Pika Punket Pie* was making good time until the canoe capsized when rounding the turn buoy. With the Department of Public Safety Boating Safety Division also nearby, Tinian Sen. Jude Hofsneider mounted a rescue party in a spare canoe when *Pika Punket Pie* filled with water due to a faulty plug and could not be flipped upright to finish the race. Despite this unfortunate "turn" of events, the *Pika Punket Pie* crew cheered on the other teams from shore, with last year's winner JC Café Team eventually recapturing their title.

The shade of pine trees framed *Pika Pika* in their beach volleyball win over High Flyers, while JM Pika House presented the best entry in the Booth Decorating Contest.

For the children, a large but late-starting crab won Anita Cameron top place in the *umang* (hermit crab) race for girls, while Branden Cepeda's entry won the boys' race. A co-ed sack race saw boys and girls jumping—in one case, tumbling—their way to the finish line.

Tug-of-war provided to be a crowd favorite for the weekend. As grounds crew watered down the dirt turned dusty by the tropical heat, three teams of boys prepared themselves. The first team of obviously younger boys put up a brave effort against their stronger opponent. In round two, another group of boys put up an unexpectedly strong fight before eventually succumbing to the champions. Later, the men took the rope for a strength struggle.

The road/off road 65K Pika Bike Race at 6am on Saturday morning attracted 26 riders, many of who brought their bikes over via ferry the prior day.

"By all accounts, this year's Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was a success. Even the weather was perfect!" said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. "We look forward to welcoming even more visitors in 2019."

The Tinian Hot Pepper Festival is held every President's Day weekend on the island of Tinian, accessible from Saipan in 10 minutes via commuter flight. **(MVA)**

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Trump urges ban on gun devices like bump stocks

WASHINGTON (AP)—As a grieving Florida community demanded action on guns, President Donald Trump on Tuesday directed the Justice Department to move to ban devices like the rapid-fire bump stocks used in last year's Las Vegas massacre. It was a small sign of movement on the gun violence issue that has long tied Washington in knots.

"We must do more to protect our children," Trump said, adding that his administration was working hard to respond to the shooting in Parkland that left 17 dead.

After past mass killings yielded little action on tighter gun controls, the White House is trying to demonstrate that it is taking the issue seriously. The president, a strong and vocal supporter of gun rights, has not endorsed more robust changes sought by gun control activists. But the White House cast the president in recent days as having been swayed by the school shooting in Florida and willing to listen to proposals.

In a tweet Tuesday night, Trump indicated he wants to strengthen the background check system, but offered no specifics.

Trump said: "Whether we are Republican or Democrat, we must now focus on strengthening Background Checks!"

Asked at a press briefing Tuesday if Trump was open to reinstating a ban on assault-type weapons, spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said White House officials "haven't closed the door on any front." She also said that the idea of raising the age limit to buy an AR-15 was "on the table for us to discuss."

Sen. Chris Murphy, a Connecticut Democrat and leading advocate for tighter gun controls, said Trump's directive suggested the president was aware of fresh energy on the issue and called it a sign that "for the first time" politicians are "scared of the political consequences of inaction on guns."

A bipartisan legislative effort to ban bump stocks last year fizzled out. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives announced in December that it was reviewing whether weapons using bump stocks should be considered illegal machine guns under federal law.

Under the Obama administration, the ATF had concluded that bump stocks did not violate federal law. But the acting director of the ATF told lawmakers in December that the ATF and Justice Department would not have initiated the review if a ban "wasn't a possibility at the end."

The Justice Department had

not made any announcement regarding its review when Trump on Tuesday signed a memorandum directing the agency to complete the review as soon as possible and propose a rule "banning all devices that turn legal weapons into machine guns."

Reacting to Trump's memo, the department said in a statement that it "understands this is a priority for the president and has acted quickly to move through the rulemaking process. We look forward to the results of that process as soon as it is duly completed."

A day earlier, Trump sent another signal he had been swayed by the Parkland shooting and the dramatic calls for action in its aftermath. A White House statement said Trump was looking at a bill that would strengthen federal gun background checks. On Wednesday, he will host parents, teachers and students at the White House for a "listening session" that will include people impacted by mass shootings in Parkland, Columbine, Colorado and Newtown, Connecticut.

The president was moved by a visit Friday with Florida victims in the hospital and is trying to work on solutions, said a person familiar with his thinking who sought anonymity to discuss internal conversations.

Investors are winners as companies lay out tax-saving plans

NEW YORK (AP)—It's just what the GOP said we'd hear from a CEO after being handed a big tax break.

But when Charles Scharf announced plans last month to spend his company's tax savings on higher wages and technology, investors began selling.

The Bank of New York Mellon CEO said he had a responsibility to "share the benefit" with workers and build the "company of the future." But investors want to share in the tax bounty as well—through higher dividends and buybacks. By the end of the day, the bank's stock was down 4.4 percent.

The biggest tax rewrite in three decades was sold by its Republican backers as a way to help American workers, and there have been plenty of announcements about bonuses and plans to buy equipment and make other capital investments to improve productivity and raise wages. But much more money has been earmarked for dividends and buybacks.

Retailer Lowe's has authorized \$7.1 billion in buybacks,

triple the level planned before the tax overhaul. Radio giant Sirius XM has increased its program by a fifth to \$12 billion. And Wednesday Cisco announced the biggest number of all—a \$25 billion increase to its repurchase program.

Buybacks, in which companies purchase their own shares and retire them, are popular with investors because fewer shares outstanding lifts earnings per share, the most watched barometer of corporate success.

A recent survey by Morgan Stanley showed Wall Street stock analysts expect companies to allocate 43 percent of tax savings to dividends and buybacks. Capital spending and workers will get 17 percent and 13 percent, respectively.

The flood of buybacks could help drive stocks higher during a touchy moment in the market. They've played that role before in the nine-year bull market, as companies step in to lift share prices at crucial moments when traditional buyers like insurers and individual investors turned to sellers.

But critics note that stocks now are more expensive relative to long-term earnings than at any time since the dot-com boom and that the money might be wasted if stocks drop anyway. They also argue that money used for buybacks—trillions of dollars in recent years—is often better spent on improving operations and making workers more productive, which can lead to "real" wage increases that do more than just keep up with inflation.

"What are you getting from buying back stock? It doesn't generate any growth, any real activity," said James Abate, chief investment officer of Centre Asset Management.

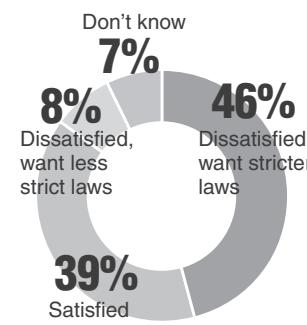
To be sure, the tax overhaul isn't all about buybacks and may end up helping workers, too. The conservative Americans for Tax Reform has been touting its tally of three million workers promised bonuses and other compensation gains so far, a number cited by President Donald Trump in his State of the Union address. That's welcome news given the slow growth in wages in recent years.

Nation

Florida survivors, lawmakers on collision course over guns

Most Americans want stricter laws

Americans who said they were dissatisfied with U.S. gun laws were asked: Would you like to see gun laws in this country made more strict, less strict or remain as they are?



Source: Gallup poll Jan. 7, 2018

Graphic: Staff, TNS

about the shooting, some of which accused them of being liberal pawns.

About 500 Leon High School students and parents applauded as the students got off the bus from Broward County.

Stoneman Douglas senior Diego Pfeiffer thanked his Tallahassee counterparts as a group of Broward County students stood behind him on the school steps.

"This isn't about school shootings. This isn't about violence anymore. This is about hope. This is about moving forward," Pfeiffer told the crowd.

As the grieving Florida students demanded action on guns, President Donald Trump on Tuesday directed the Justice Department to move to

ban devices like the rapid-fire bump stocks used in last year's Las Vegas massacre. It was a small sign of movement on the gun violence issue that has long tied Washington in knots.

"We must do more to protect our children," said Trump, a strong and vocal supporter of gun rights. He added that his administration was working hard to respond to the Florida rampage.

Meanwhile at the Florida Statehouse, a Democratic representative asked for a procedural move that would have allowed the Republican-controlled House to consider a ban on large-capacity magazines and assault-style rifles such as the AR-15 that was wielded by the suspect, Nikolas Cruz.

The bill had been assigned to three committees but was not scheduled for a hearing. The House quickly nixed the Democratic motion. The vote broke down along party lines, and Republicans criticized Democrats for forcing the vote.

Because the committees will not meet again before the legislative session ends March 9, the move essentially extinguishes hope that lawmakers would vote on any sweeping measures to restrict assault rifles, although other proposals could still be considered.

Report: Hawaii wasn't ready to handle missile threat alert

HONOLULU (AP)—Hawaii's nuclear missile scare showed that the state began testing alerts before fully developing a plan to address the ballistic missile threat and that a public outreach campaign months earlier wasn't effective, said a report released Tuesday.

The state Department of Defense, the agency that oversees Hawaii's emergency management, released the internal review after an alert was sent to cellphones, televisions and radio stations across the state last month.

The notification, which read "BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER. THIS IS NOT A DRILL," triggered widespread panic as more than a million residents and visitors feared they were about to face a ballistic missile strike.

Gov. David Ige assigned Brig. Gen. Kenneth Hara, the second in command at the Department of Defense, to conduct a comprehensive review of the agency's operations.

"The response and recovery sections of the plan were minimally developed," Hara's report said. "The plan lacked clear details for sheltering, county coordination and protocols for decision to send out all clear or false missile alert messages, e.g., interception, missile impact without effect to Hawaii, etc."

The public didn't get adequate directions about what to do, the report said.

An agency employee mistakenly sent the alert to cellphones and broadcast stations across the state during a shift-change drill at the agency on Jan. 13.

Officials later disclosed the

employee didn't think he and his colleagues were participating in a drill and instead believed a real attack was imminent. The state has since fired him.

State officials said the worker, who had been employed at the agency for 11 years, had mistakenly believed two prior drills—for tsunami and fire warnings—were actual events. His supervisors counseled him but kept him for a decade in a position that had to be renewed each year.

The ex-worker disputed that, saying he wasn't aware of any performance problems. The employee, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he feared for his safety after receiving death threats, told reporters that he was devastated about causing panic but was "100 percent sure" at the time that the attack was real.

Asia

ASIAN BRIEFS

Rights groups want probe of civilians held by Myanmar army

BANGKOK (AP)—Rights groups are urging authorities in Myanmar to investigate and release information about two ethnic Kachin civilians believed to be held by soldiers in the country's north, where fighting has raged between government forces and armed Kachin rebels. Fortify Rights, a Southeast Asia-focused human rights group, urged Myanmar officials on Tuesday to urgently account for the two Kachin civilians, who were reportedly taken almost three weeks ago from a camp for the internally displaced in Kachin state's Mai Hkawng village. The seizure of civilians in ethnic minority regions by Myanmar's army is not rare. Rights groups say they are usually taken by troops who accuse them of having a connection to armed rebel groups.

Japan sees transfer at sea that may violate NKorea sanctions

TOKYO (AP)—Japan says its military has witnessed a ship-to-ship transfer on the high seas that it "strongly suspects" violates U.N. sanctions on North Korea. The Foreign Ministry said late Tuesday that a surveillance plane and an escort ship saw a North Korean-flagged tanker alongside a smaller ship about 250 kilometers (150 miles) off Shanghai in the East China Sea. The Feb. 16 sighting was the third one reported by Japan in the past month. The Foreign Ministry said Japan had notified the U.N. Security Council of the transfer. The U.N. has toughened sanctions on North Korea to pressure it to give up its nuclear weapons development. Japan and the U.S. have said the sanctions must be enforced strictly to be effective.

Storm blocks road, causes other disruptions in New Zealand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Mudslides blocked the only road to a small New Zealand town Wednesday after a powerful Pacific storm caused disruptions across parts of the country. The 1,000 tourists and 5,000 locals in Takaka are not entirely trapped, but would have to use a boat, helicopter or small plane to leave town now or wait a week or more before the road is cleared and repaired. The storm that hit late Tuesday was the remnants of Cyclone Gita, which last week ripped through the Pacific nation of Tonga, destroying homes, churches and the historic Parliament House.

The winds weakened as the storm moved on an arc through the Pacific. But the heavy rains were enough to cause disruptions in New Zealand, although the country escaped major damage. Tasman District Mayor Richard Kempthorne said the main concern was ensuring Takaka had enough fuel and food. He said he'd been working with civil defense authorities to ensure supplies were being brought in by boat.

India arrests 11 suspects in \$1.8 billion bank fraud case

NEW DELHI (AP)—India's federal investigating agency on Tuesday arrested another five executives as it swooped down on companies run by two main suspects in an alleged \$1.8 billion bank fraud case that continued for six years. Central Bureau of Investigation spokesman Abhished Dayal said the five worked for the companies owned by Nirav Modi, a billionaire jeweller, and his uncle Mehul Chinubhai Choksi. Their whereabouts are not known. Five bank executives and another employee of Modi's company Firestar group were arrested over the past three days for allegedly conspiring to cheat the state-owned Punjab National Bank, bringing the total number to 11, the spokesman said. Modi allegedly cheated the bank by using fake bank "letters of understanding" to get loans. Most of the letters were sent to overseas offices of Indian banks, which made the actual loans, said Sunil Mehta, Punjab National Bank's managing director. India's Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Tuesday blamed bank management and auditors.

Japanese man given custody of 13 surrogate kids

BANGKOK (AP)—A Thai court on Tuesday granted legal custody of 13 babies carried by surrogate mothers to a secretive Japanese millionaire who is their biological father, reviving a bizarre tale that captured tabloid headlines four years ago, but leaving some basic questions unanswered. Mitsutoki Shigeta's case raised eyebrows in 2014 when police raided a Bangkok condominium and found nine babies and nine nannies living in unfurnished rooms. It was determined that Shigeta had fathered the children using Thai surrogate mothers. The case, along with several others, helped usher in a Thai law prohibiting commercial surrogacy for foreign clients. Bangkok's Central Juvenile and

Family Court gave Shigeta sole legal custody of the children, ruling that he is financially stable and had shown his plans to care for them. The ruling said Shigeta had a right to custody because the children were born before the new law was enacted, and because the surrogate mothers signed documents waiving their custody rights. Shigeta, who has kept an extremely low profile, did not attend the court's sessions and had a lawyer represent him. Shigeta is the son of an owner of a Japanese company and earns over 100 million baht (\$3.1 million) in annual dividends, which shows he is financially capable of looking after the children, the court said in a statement. He is now 28 years old, according to a copy of his passport released by Thai police in 2014.

Australia helps Indian Ocean neighbors enhance rescue skills

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Australian authorities say they have helped make the Indian Ocean safer for air and sea travelers since the Malaysian airliner vanished in the vast expanse four years ago through search and rescue training with island nations. Search and rescue officials from Mauritius, Maldives and Sri Lanka are visiting the Australian Maritime Safety Authority headquarters in Canberra this week as part of a regional training program that began in 2015. Rick Allen, an Australian search and rescue coordinator who is taking part in the training, said five Sri Lankan fishermen were rescued faster and more efficiently after their boat sank in 2016 thanks to the three countries having an Australian online broadcast system to alert merchant shipping to emergencies. "We're all about strengthening the response options that are available in search and rescue. We're particularly dealing in that remote northwestern part of the Indian Ocean," Allen said. "Already we're seeing benefits. So the program not only involved work-shopping, meeting together, it also involved delivering systems and delivering tool that enable our partners to work more effectively in search and rescue," he added. Australia has developed particular expertise in search and rescue operations that test the limits of the distances that search planes can stay airborne. Because of Australia's isolation, the nation of just 24 million people has search and rescue responsibility for around 10 percent of the Earth's surface.

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World

Govt bombing of Damascus suburbs kills more than 100

BEIRUT (AP)—Government forces bombed the northeastern suburbs of the Syrian capital for a second straight day on Tuesday, killing more than 100 people and raising the specter of a full-scale offensive that could spell catastrophe for the nearly 400,000 residents trapped under siege.

Rescuers raced to reach survivors in the devastated Damascus suburbs known as eastern Ghouta as warplanes and helicopter gunships circled overhead, bombing hospitals, apartment blocks, markets and other civilian targets. The suburbs are the last major stronghold for rebels in the capital region.

At least 250 civilians were killed during the 48 hours of unrelenting onslaught that began Monday, including 58 children, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group. Another 1,000 people were wounded, it said.

"We no longer have the words to describe children's suffering and our outrage," the U.N. children's agency said in a terse statement about the carnage.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov appeared to endorse the unrestrained assault, which he said was backed by the Russian air force. "In keeping with the existing agreements, the fight against terrorism cannot be restricted by anything," he said.

Russia has been an unwavering ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces and was instrumental to the all-out assault in late 2016 that ejected rebels from their enclave in eastern Aleppo, Syria's largest city before the war—an outcome that Lavrov said could serve as a model for eastern Ghouta.

Pro-government forces have been amassing since the weekend on the perimeter of the rebel-held region, a collection of towns and farmland that once provided grain

to the capital before nearly five years of warfare turned it into a landscape of havoc and despair.

The towns of eastern Ghouta were among the first to organize into self-governing collectives and shake off government rule after popular demonstrations against Assad swept through the country in 2011, eventually leading to civil war. They are also among the last to resist Assad's determined campaign to bring every last rebellious corner of the country to heel. Assad and his allies maintain they are fighting a war on terrorism.

Monther Fares, spokesman for the Ahrar al-Sham rebel faction operating in eastern Ghouta, said densely populated residential areas were bearing the brunt of the attacks, a hallmark tactic of the government and its allies to devastate civilian areas and infrastructure before launching a final ground assault.

The battle for rebel-held east Aleppo culminated in the evacuation of tens of thousands of civilians from their homes, with many unable to return. A subsequent U.N. investigation charged that the campaign amounted to forced displacement of a population and rose to the level of a war crime.

That outcome could still be a while coming in eastern Ghouta, which is considerably larger than east Aleppo. It is also divided between two rebel factions that deeply distrust each other, as well as a small presence of al-Qaida-linked fighters and a handful of other militias that could lead to the fragmentation of the enclave, according to Aron Lund, a fellow at the New York-based Century Foundation. That, at least, could spare civilians some of the devastation of an all-out ground assault.

Ukraine's president signs bill on Russia-backed regions

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has signed a bill aimed at reintegrating the territory in the country's east controlled by Russia-backed separatists.

The bill passed last month designates the areas in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions as "temporarily occu-

Government shelling and airstrikes kill dozens in rebel-held Damascus suburbs



Source: AP
Graphic: Staff, TNS

and fruit to the capital before nearly five years of warfare turned it into a landscape of havoc and despair.

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The bill signed Tuesday contains no reference to the Minsk deal brokered by France and Germany that obliged Ukraine to pass legislation offering broad autonomy to the separatist regions and amnesty to rebels. Most Ukrainian political forces reject that.

Focus

Mass shooters use loopholes, lapses in checks to get guns

By MICHAEL R. SISAK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nikolas Cruz is just the latest U.S. mass shooter to legally obtain and own guns because of limited firearms laws, lapses in the background check process or law enforcement's failure to heed warnings of concerning behavior.

The 19-year-old had made threats and was expelled from school, bragged about killing animals, posed with guns on social media and went to a clinic for mental health treatment before took an AR-15-style rifle he had bought legally to a Florida high school and killed 17 people.

The same style weapon has been used in Sutherland Springs, Texas; Las Vegas; San Bernardino, California; and Newtown, Connecticut. A similar rifle was used in Orlando.

President Donald Trump kept a loophole allowing people to obtain guns while undergoing mental health treatment that President Barack Obama had tried to close. Other mass shooters have gotten around restrictions by using weapons initially purchased legally.

A look at some recent mass shootings, the number of deaths and how the attackers obtained their guns:

PARKLAND, FLORIDA: FEB. 14, 2018. 17 DEAD

Cruz legally purchased a Smith & Wesson M&P 15 rifle in February 2017 from a licensed gun store located about 3 miles (5 kilometers) from the school, law enforcement officials said.

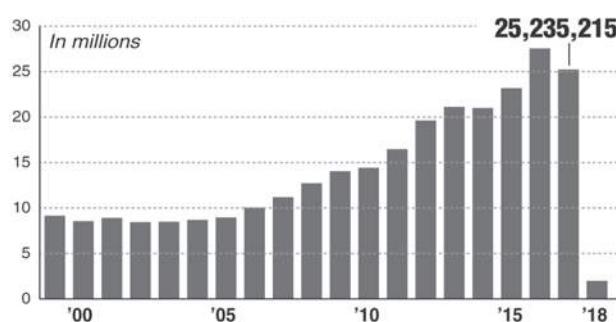
Cruz had gone to a mental health clinic for treatment but hadn't been there in more than a year, Broward County Mayor Beam Furr said. Under federal law, gun purchases can only be blocked if a person is legally declared a "mental defective" or committed to a mental institution.

If Cruz wanted a handgun, however, the sale wouldn't have been allowed. Federal law allows people as young as 18 to buy semi-automatic weapons from licensed dealers. Handgun purchases are restricted to 21 and older.

Cruz had his gun for about seven months when he commented on YouTube that he was "going to be a professional school shooter." The FBI

Firearm background checks

The National Instant Criminal Background Check System conducted a total of 25.2 million in 2017.



Top 10 highest days for background checks

Nov. 24, 2017	203,086
Nov. 25, 2016	185,713
Nov. 27, 2015	185,345
Dec. 21, 2012	177,170
Nov. 28, 2014	175,754
March 4, 2014	167,585
Dec. 20, 2012	159,604
Nov. 23, 2012	154,873
Dec. 22, 2012	153,697
Dec. 19, 2012	153,672

Source: FBI
Graphic: Staff, TNS

said it investigated but was unable to identify the person who posted the comment.

In January, the FBI received a tip from someone who said Cruz had expressed a desire

to kill people, was making disturbing social media posts and could potentially commit a school shooting.

The agency failed to follow protocols and no further investigation was conducted.

SUTHERLAND SPRINGS, TEXAS: NOV. 5, 2017. 25 DEAD

Devin Patrick Kelley's history of domestic abuse barred him from legally buying guns, but he did so anyway because information about his crimes was never entered into a federal database used for background checks.

Kelley purchased four guns, including the AR-15-style rifle and handguns found in and near First Baptist Church, from licensed dealers in Texas and Colorado over a four-year span.

The 26-year-old passed required background checks because the Air Force never informed the FBI about his criminal conduct - an assault on his wife and her child that led to a court-martial, a year of confinement and a bad conduct discharge.

Military rules require that the information be shared.

A 1996 law bans people convicted of even a misdemeanor-level domestic violence offense from owning guns. Kelley was convicted at a court-martial for choking his then-wife and fracturing her son's skull in 2012.

LAS VEGAS: OCT. 1, 2017. 58 DEAD

Stephen Paddock amassed the bulk of his arsenal over the span of a year, culminating with a purchase three days before he

holed up in the Mandalay Bay hotel and opened fire on a country music festival below.

Paddock purchased 33 of the 49 weapons found in the hotel room and at his homes between October 2016 and Sept. 28, 2017, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

None of the purchases drew scrutiny because the 64-year-old Paddock passed all background checks. His gradual accumulation of weapons went undetected because federal law does not require licensed gun dealers to alert the government about rifle purchases.

Twelve of the semi-automatic rifles recovered by authorities were equipped with bump stocks, a device that allows them to fire repeatedly without pulling the trigger over and over.

ORLANDO, FLORIDA: JUNE 12, 2016. 49 DEAD

Omar Mateen purchased an AR-15-style rifle, a Sig Sauer MCX, and a handgun on separate days about a week before the attack from a licensed dealer near his home in Fort Pierce, Florida. The 29-year-old passed a background check and had two security licenses, one of which allowed him to be armed while on duty.

The FBI investigated Mateen in 2013 and 2014 after co-workers shared concerns about statements he had made concerning possible ties to terrorist groups. Neither inquiry led to criminal charges. Even if he had been placed on a terrorism watch list, Congress in 2015 rejected attempts to prevent people on the list from purchasing guns.

SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA: DEC. 2, 2015. 14 DEAD

Syed Farook and his wife used weapons that the FBI said were legally purchased by his neighbor, Enrique Marquez, from a licensed dealer in 2011 and 2012. Marquez, who pleaded guilty to charges he conspired to provide support to terrorists and made false statements to acquire a firearm, told investigators that Farook asked him to buy the weapons because he would draw less attention. At the time, the FBI said, the men were plotting to shoot up a community college and a highway.

ROSEBURG, OREGON: OCT. 1, 2015. 10 DEAD

Christopher Harper-Mercer and his family members legally purchased the handguns and rifle he used in the Umpqua Community College shoot-

ing from a federally licensed gun dealer, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA: JUNE 17, 2015. 9 DEAD

A drug arrest should have prevented Dylann Roof from purchasing the pistol authorities said he used at Emanuel AME Church, but a record-keeping error and background check delay allowed the transaction to go through. The FBI said a background check examiner never saw the arrest report because the wrong arresting agency was listed in state criminal history records.

After three days, the gun dealer was legally permitted to complete the transaction.

WASHINGTON, D.C.: SEPT. 16, 2013. 12 DEAD

Aaron Alexis, a former reservist turned civilian contractor, passed state and federal background checks and legally purchased the pump-action shotgun used in the Washington Navy Yard shooting despite a history of violent outbursts and recent mental health treatment. Alexis was accused of firing a gun in anger in Texas in 2004 and in Seattle in 2010 but was not prosecuted in either case. In 2011, he received an honorable discharge despite bouts of insubordination, disorderly conduct and unauthorized absences. None of that would have disqualified him from purchasing a weapon.

NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT: DEC. 14, 2012. 26 DEAD

Adam Lanza used his mother's weapons, including a .223-caliber semi-automatic rifle, in the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Lanza's mother, whom he fatally shot before going to the school, also purchased the ammunition, investigators said.

AURORA, COLORADO: JULY 20, 2012. 12 DEAD

James Holmes was receiving psychiatric treatment when he passed required federal background checks and legally purchased the weapons he used in his movie theater assault. As in the Parkland and Navy Yard cases, treatment alone did not prevent him from buying guns.

AP reporters Kelli Kennedy in Parkland, Florida, Michael Balsamo in Los Angeles and Sadie Gurman in Washington contributed to this report.

FIFTH YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY

In Loving Memory of

† Patricia Taitano Cabrera Reyes

Lovingly known as "Patsy"



We, the family would like to invite all our families, relatives and friends to join us in prayers as we commemorate the 5th year death anniversary of the passage of our beloved unto eternal life.

Daily Mass will be celebrated at San Vicente Church beginning on Thursday, February 15, 2018 at 6:00PM. Nightly Rosary will be said at 7:00PM at the family residence in Dandan.

On the final day, Friday, February 23, 2018. Mass will be at 6:00PM at San Vicente Church followed by the Holy Rosary. Dinner will be served at the family residence in Dandan.

Your prayers, thoughts, and presence are sincerely appreciated.

Thank You, Si Yu'us Ma'ase yan Oloomway

Antonio "Toi" A. Reyes, Children and Families

Environment

Some fear California drought cuts could erase water rights



In this July 8, 2014 file photo, a sign alerts visitors to water conservation efforts is displayed on a parched lawn at the state Capitol in Sacramento, Calif. Members of the state Water Resources Control Board delayed a decision about whether to bring back what had been temporary water bans from California's historic, five-year drought, Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018.

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—A proposal to make California's drought-era water restrictions permanent could allow the state to chip away at long-held water rights in an unprecedented power grab, representatives from water districts and other users told regulators Tuesday.

Members of the state Water Resources Control Board delayed a decision about whether to bring back what had been temporary water bans from California's drought, spanning 2013 to 2017. The plan is part of an effort to make water conservation a way of life, with climate change expected to lead to longer, more severe droughts.

It comes after U.S. officials declared that nearly half the state, all of it in the south, is back in drought just months after emerging from it.

Officials from several irrigation and water agencies said the restrictions are reasonable, but not the plan to impose them under the state Constitution's prohibition on the "waste or unreasonable use" of water. That would create a slippery slope of allowing the board to repeatedly chip away at California's historic protection of water rights for landowners, they said.

"Erratic individuals can occupy great positions of power in government, and you had better believe they will occupy your chair someday," said Jackson Minasian, an attorney for Stanford Vina Ranch Irrigation Co. "Their view of what is 'waste and unreasonable use' will be radically different than yours."

Some water users also said permanent mandates would be

too rigid in a sprawling state with needs that vary by region.

The restrictions, punishable by a \$500 fine, include prohibitions on watering lawns so much that the water flows into the street, using a hose to wash down sidewalks or using a hose without an automatic shut-off nozzle to wash cars. A final decision is now expected by April 17.

Hotels would have to ask guests if they really need their towels and sheets washed each day. Running an ornamental fountain without a recirculating system would be barred, as would watering outside within 48 hours of a good rain. Another measure would give cities and counties until 2025 to stop watering ordinary street medians.

Restaurants would be allowed to serve water only on request if the governor declares a drought emergency.

Water officials expect neighbors to be responsible for detecting and reporting most of the wasteful water use, and they have no plans to add more enforcement officers if the permanent restrictions are adopted.

Generally, first-time offenders would get warnings, while repeat offenders risk fines.

Environmental groups urged officials to crack down more aggressively on wasteful water use rather than rely on policies that encourage neighbors to develop good practices.

Water board chairwoman Felicia Marcus said the restrictions are hardly a long-term solution to California's drought problems but "the least we should do."

"We're not in an emergency

right now, but shame on us if we just bury our heads in the sand ... allow people to go out and waste water by washing down the driveway with a hose when a broom would do," she said.

The plan also includes legislation that would create customized water-use limits for urban water districts, which would risk state enforcement if they fell short. Lawmakers also are considering whether

to allow districts to enforce drought regulations, a power now reserved for the state.

Gov. Jerry Brown lifted California's emergency drought status a year ago, after a wet winter. Strict 25 percent conservation orders for cities and towns and other restrictions then were phased out.

Some climate scientists say the drought never fully ended in parts of Southern California. The Los Angeles

area has received just a fourth of normal rainfall so far this rainy season.

In the Northern Sierra Nevada, the winter so far has been the third-driest on record for the year's wettest three months—December, January and February—produced very little rainfall, said John Lehigh of the California Department of Water Resources.

The water content of the Sierra snowpack, which feeds

water supplies, is about 20 percent of normal for this time of year, he said.

Most of California's reservoirs are at or slightly above their historical average for this time of year, but experts expect that to fall when water is released in the spring and summer and not enough melting snow can replenish it.

"This is a very ugly picture in terms of the water supply management," Lehigh said.

IN CELEBRATION OF HER NEW LIFE

Frances Faibar Rebuenog

JUNE 10, 1969 - FEBRUARY 15, 2018

In her new life, she now joins her

Grandparents: †Pedro S. and †Carmen F. Rebuenog

Parents in Law: †Ignacio and †Teofila M. DeLeon Guerrero

Mother: †Juana R. Tereyego

Rearred Father: †Romualdo L. Tereyego

Aunts/ Uncles: †Julian and †Maria R. Camacho
†Jacinta F. Rebuenog

Brothers/ Sisters/ In Laws: †Juan M. DeLeon Guerrero
†Thomas M. DeLeon Guerrero
†Douglas Cushnie
†Maria S. Pangelinan
†Ana Camacho

Her memories will forever live in the hearts of her:

Husband: David Masga DeLeon Guerrero

Children and Rachel and Jason Simina
Grandchildren: (Frantina Carmen, Maria Divine)

Father: Crystal R. DeLeon Guerrero

Rearred Mother: Dave Jr. R. DeLeon Guerrero

Brothers/ Sisters: Bonifacio I. Wabol

Brothers/ Sisters: Maria L. Tereyego

Aunts/ Uncles: Ellen and Roman Agulto & Family
Pete and Dorsia Tereyego & Family
†Julian / †Maria R. Camacho & Family
Vicente F. Rebuenog / †Juliana S. Kaipat & Family
Juan Diego/ Ramona Rebuenog & Family
Carmen Rebuenog
Enrique / Sonia Rebuenog & Family
Jose / Melrosa Rebuenog & Family
Sophia R. / Ralph Takafuji & Family

Brothers / Sisters In-Law:
Jose Pangelinan & Family
Herman M. / Jacinta DLGuerrero & Family
Edward M. / †Lourdes DLGuerrero & Family
Regina DLG. / Douglas Cushnie & Family
Lucy DLG. / †Francisco Pangelinan & Family
Santiago M. / Tara DLGuerrero & Family
Magdalena M. DLG. / Edward Aguon & Family
Joaquina DLG. / Vicente Salas & Family
Ignacio M. / Vivian S. DLGuerrero & Family
Francisco M. / Joanne T. DLGuerrero & Family
Vicente M. / Dorothy DLGuerrero & Family
Maryann DLG. / John Sablan & Family
†Juan M. / Luisa L. DLGuerrero & Family
†Thomas M. / Oliva DLGuerrero & Family

†Frances will be greatly missed by numerous relatives, friends, nieces, nephews and colleagues.

Daily Mass of Intention for the repose of her soul is being celebrated at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 6:00am and at San Vicente Church at 6:00pm. Nightly Rosary is being recited at the family residence in Chalan Laulau.

On Friday, February 23, 2018 her remains will be escorted from Nuestra Senora dela Paz Memorial Chapel to the family residence in Chalan Laulau at 3:00pm. Responso Service will take place upon arrival of remains and will remain at the residence for a bela.

On Saturday, February 24, 2018 at 7:30am her remains will be taken to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Cathedral for public viewing and visitation. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00am. Interment Service will be at Sanctuario PAX Memorial Gardens where she will be at a peaceful rest.

Please join us in prayers,
Si Yu's Ma'ase – Olomwaay

David Masga DeLeon Guerrero, Children and Family.

Life & Style

Stars, educators lead effort for kids to see 'Black Panther'

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

(AP)—For years, Zavier Thompson has followed Marvel superhero movies. But the 16-year-old student in Albuquerque has always wanted to see a popular film with a black superhero and black themes.

Thanks to an Albuquerque educator, the aspiring hip-hop and spoken word artist finally got his wish Thursday when he was given tickets to a private screening of "Black Panther."

"It was amazing. The music, the action...everything," said Thompson, who is black. "It made me proud to see our culture depicted like that."

"Black Panther" is about the mythical and highly advanced African nation of Wakanda, where T'Challa, played by Chadwick Boseman, inherits the throne but is challenged by a Wakandan exile named Killmonger, played by Michael B. Jordan. It's the 18th film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe and based on 50-year-old material created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby.

The movie set a record with its \$235 million debut at the top of the U.S. box office over the holiday weekend, becoming a blockbuster but also a cultural phenomenon. It's why some educators, philanthropists, celebrities, and business owners are pulling together their resources to bring chil-



AP
In this Feb. 16, 2018, photo, University Prep Academy High School students react in Detroit to an announcement that all 600 students will see the film "Black Panther."

Blackbirds and Twitter Detroit took on the costs of tickets and transportation.

Also, students of the acclaimed Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta were told in a video that went viral they were going to see "Black Panther." In the footage, the 5th-grade students are shown cheering and dancing upon hearing the news.

Anthony "Top Dawg" Tiffith, CEO of Top Dawg Entertainment, the label of Kendrick Lamar, announced that he would pay for around 1,000 South Central Los Angeles children living in public housing to see the movie (Lamar did the film's soundtrack). Oscar-winner Octavia Spencer announced plans to host a screening in Mississippi "to ensure all our brown children can see themselves as a superhero." Over the weekend, Serena Williams surprised girls in the club Black Girls Code with a private screening, which she attended. "Empire" star Jussie Smollett took to Instagram to announce he bought out two screenings in Chicago for elementary students and high school students.

dren of color to see it.

Elementary school students in Detroit, middle school students in Atlanta and students living Los Angeles public housing all have been surprised in recent days with free tickets and transportation to experience a movie that is captivating black communities nationwide.

While black leads in TV and film have grown over the years, there is still a lack of positive minority images com-

ing from Hollywood, which is why many are stressing the importance of having young black kids see the movie.

"Something very special is happening here," said Joycelyn Jackson, director of the Black Student Union for Albuquerque Public Schools, the educator who helped Thompson get into the Albuquerque screening.

"Congrats to the entire #blackpanther team! Because of you, young people will fi-

nally see superheroes that look like them on the big screen," said former first lady Michelle Obama in a tweet Monday. "I loved this movie and I know it will inspire people of all backgrounds to dig deep and find the courage to be heroes of their own stories."

The movement began in January after former ESPN "SportsCenter" host Jemele Hill called out prominent Detroiters to help young children in the city get seats to see

"Black Panther."

"I wish I had time to do it myself but if there is anyone in Detroit trying to take kids in underserved communities to see 'Black Panther,' holla at me," the Detroit native wrote on Twitter.

In response to Hill's tweet, two Twitter groups announced plans to send the entire student body at University Prep Academy High School in Detroit to see it. Twitter's black employee group known as the

George and Amal Clooney donate \$500K to march against guns

NEW YORK (AP)—Actor George Clooney and his wife, Amal Clooney, are donating \$500,000 to students organizing nationwide marches against gun violence, and they say they'll also attend next month's planned protests.

In a statement released Tuesday, the couple says

they're inspired by the "courage and eloquence" of the survivors-turned-activists from Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Seventeen people were killed at the school and others wounded when a former student went on a rampage with an assault rifle. Students are mobilizing a March 24 march

in Washington and elsewhere to urge lawmakers to enact tougher gun control.

The Clooneys say they're donating the money in the names of their eight-month-old twins Ella and Alexander. The couple also says the family plans to "stand side by side" with students next month.



In this Oct. 22, 2017 file photo, Amal Clooney and George Clooney arrive at the premiere of "Suburbicon" in Los Angeles.

'Black Panther' scores record Monday

NEW YORK (AP)—With a massive \$40.2 million in ticket sales Monday, "Black Panther" has set another box-office record: biggest Monday ever.

The Walt Disney Co. again raised its box-office estimates for the Marvel sensation on Tuesday. The film's updated Monday performance—\$7 million higher than Disney earlier forecast—narrowly topped the previous record, set by "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" in 2015 with \$40.1 million.

The higher Monday figure gives "Black Panther" the second biggest four-day weekend, behind only the \$288.1 million of "The Force Awakens." With \$242 million over the Presidents' Day weekend, "Black Panther" moves ahead of December's "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" in the ranks of four-day starts.

Ryan Coogler's film, starring Chadwick Boseman, is the first big-budget tent pole release featuring a nearly all-black cast. The movie's three-day gross of \$201.8 million

ranks fifth highest of all time, not accounting for inflation.

Internationally, "Black Panther," which cost \$200 million to make, is also outperforming earlier estimates. It has made \$184.6 million overseas thus far, giving it a worldwide total of \$426.6 million.

1. "Black Panther," Disney, \$242,155,680, 4,020 locations, \$60,238 average, \$242,155,680, 1 Week.
2. "Peter Rabbit," Sony, \$23,382,931, 3,725 locations, \$6,277 average, \$54,355,473, 2 Weeks.
3. "Fifty Shades Freed," Universal, \$19,439,120, 3,768 locations, \$5,159 average, \$78,630,575, 2 Weeks.
4. "Jumanji: Welcome To The Jungle," Sony, \$10,014,906, 2,800 locations, \$3,577 average, \$379,693,471, 9 Weeks.
5. "The 15:17 To Paris," Warner Bros., \$8,923,106, 3,042 locations, \$2,933 average, \$26,670,823, 2 Weeks.
6. "The Greatest Showman," 20th Century Fox, \$6,527,597, 1,936 locations, \$3,372 average, \$155,905,953, 9 Weeks.
7. "Early Man," Lionsgate, \$4,260,148, 2,494 locations, \$1,708 average, \$4,260,148, 1 Week.
8. "Maze Runner: The Death Cure," 20th Century Fox, \$3,243,854, 1,892 locations, \$1,715 average, \$54,723,980, 4 Weeks.
9. "Winchester," Lionsgate, \$2,619,156, 1,479 locations, \$1,771 average, \$22,249,335, 3 Weeks.
10. "The Post," 20th Century Fox, \$2,437,992, 1,050 locations, \$2,322 average, \$77,047,364, 9 Weeks.

Stephen King in tweet slams congressman as 'NRA sweetheart'

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Rhode Island marks 15 years since 100 killed in club fire

WEST WARWICK, R.I. (AP) — Rhode Island is marking the 15th anniversary of a nightclub fire that killed 100 people and injured more than 200 others. The Feb. 20, 2003, fire at The Station nightclub in West Warwick started when pyrotechnics for the rock band Great White set fire to flammable foam installed as soundproofing. The site of the fire is now a memorial park. On Tuesday, some survivors, victims' relatives, fire officials and fire safety advocates gathered there to discuss a new federal tax incentive meant to make it easier for small businesses to install sprinklers. Gina Russo, a fire survivor, is president of the group that built the memorial park. She says that if there had been sprinklers in the club, "life would be completely different" for many of the people gathered there.

Man convicted of stealing John Legend's bag at JFK Airport

NEW YORK (AP) — A 64-year-old man has been convicted of stealing Grammy winner John Legend's Louis Vuitton bag containing \$25,000 Cartier cufflinks from an airport luggage cart in New York. District Attorney Richard Brown said Agustin Hilario was convicted on Tuesday of criminal possession of stolen property. He's accused of swiping

the bag last March when it was momentarily left unattended on a luggage cart at Kennedy Airport. Hilario was identified through surveillance camera footage. Legend is a singer, songwriter, musician and actor who co-starred in the film "La La Land." Prosecutors say Legend's possessions, including the \$25,000 panther-head cufflinks, were returned to him. Legend testified in court the cufflinks were given to him by his wife, model Chrissy Teigen. A message left with Hilario's attorney wasn't immediately returned.

Guess co-founder steps aside amid misconduct investigation

NEW YORK (AP) — Guess Inc. says that co-founder Paul Marciano will give up his day-to-day responsibilities at the clothing company until a sexual misconduct investigation is completed. Model and actress Kate Upton told Time magazine earlier this month that Marciano forcibly grabbed her breasts during a Guess photo shoot nearly eight years ago. She also says that he harassed her by showing up at hotels she was staying at and texting her inappropriate comments. Marciano has denied the allegations. Guess, based in Los Angeles, says that Marciano will not be paid while he steps aside. He is an executive chairman of the company's board, and is its chief creative officer. Marciano, who co-founded the brand with his brother in 1981, also owns a 17 percent stake in Guess.

AUGUSTA, Maine (AP) — Author Stephen King on Tuesday called a Maine congressman an "NRA sweetheart" for receiving thousands of dollars from the gun rights advocacy group.

King urged residents in a tweet to not vote for Republican U.S. Rep. Bruce Poliquin in November, citing his sup-

port from the National Rifle Association. The Maine-born novelist has posted several tweets about gun policy since a Florida high school shooting last week that left 17 people dead.

Poliquin adviser Brent Littlefield said the incumbent congressman is a strong Second Amendment supporter and that

he will not respond directly to a "Hollywood person."

"There are literally thousands and thousands of National Rifle Association members throughout Maine," Littlefield said. "And Congressman Poliquin has been happy to have those Maine people's support. Maine has a long tradition

of responsible and peaceful firearms ownership."

The New York Times has identified Poliquin as a top House recipient of NRA funding. The newspaper last fall said the association reported spending more than \$200,000 to help Poliquin's political career, including \$68,000 spent attacking his opponents.

Ursula K. Le Guin wins posthumous prize for essay writing

NEW YORK (AP) — The late Ursula K. Le Guin was among the recipients of literary honors presented Tuesday night by PEN America.

The science fiction/fantasy author's "No Time to Spare" won a \$10,000 prize for best essay writing. Le Guin died last month at age 88 and her award was announced during a New York ceremony hosted by PEN, the literary and human rights organization.

Poet Layli Long Soldier's debut collection "Whereas" won a \$75,000 award for the year's best book. Jenny Zhang's story collection "Sour Heart" received a \$25,000 prize for best debut fiction and Alexis Okeowo's "A Moonless, Starless Sky: Ordinary Women and Men Fighting Extremism in Africa" won a \$5,000 award given to outstanding works by "authors of color."

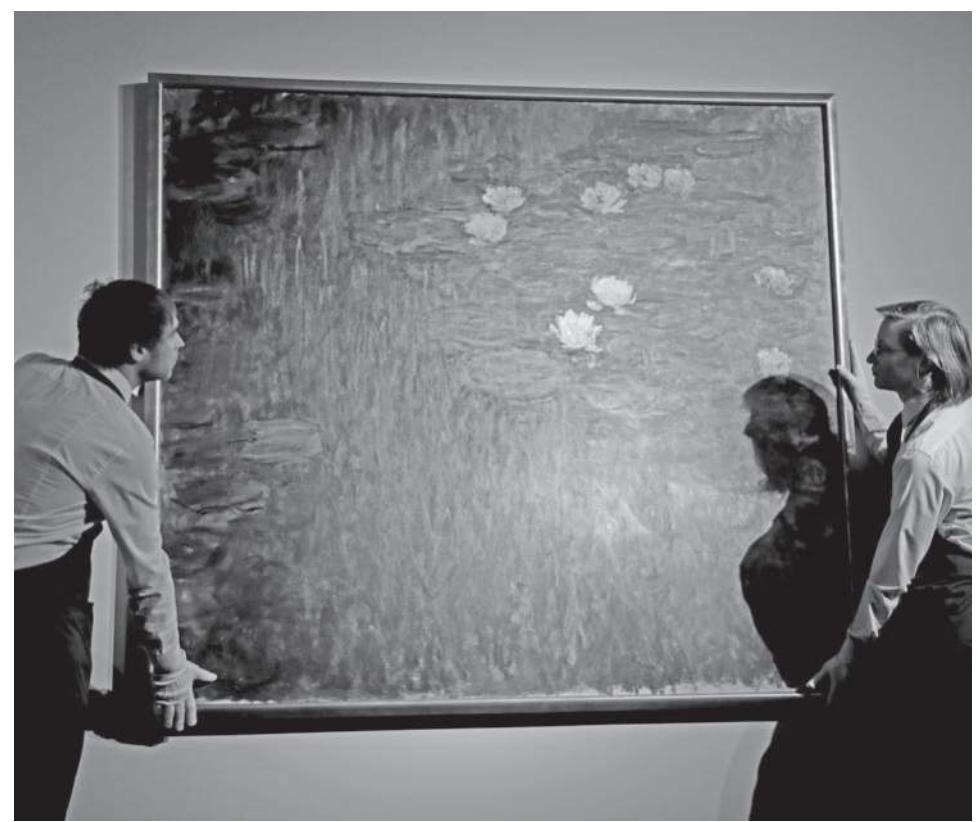
"This year's awardees represent the near and far corners of the literary landscape, including writers who have shattered barriers of race, class, ethnicity, geography, gender and sexual orientation to bring stories to new audiences, unlock empathy and take places of distinction within our collective canon," PEN

America Executive Director Suzanne Nossel said in a statement. "In times of challenge great literature offers a desperately needed window

onto other possibilities."

Lifetime achievement awards had been previously announced and were given to Edmund White, who won the

PEN/Saul Bellow Award for American fiction, and Edna O'Brien, winner of the PEN/Nabokov Award for international literature.



ART AUCTION

Christie's London auction house staff pose for photographs with Claude Monet's "Nympheas en fleur," which will feature in the upcoming May 7-11 New York sale of the collection of Peggy and David Rockefeller, at their premises in London, Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018. The Monet is estimated to fetch \$50 million-\$70 million (35.7 million to 50 million pounds, 40.5million to 56.7 million euro). The art collection amassed by billionaire David Rockefeller could raise more than \$500 million for charity when it is auctioned this spring.

AP

Message left on voicemail embarrasses bulimia patient

DEAR ABBY: My psychiatrist's office called and left a very sensitive voicemail about my bulimia on a message machine shared with other individuals. Our voicemails are sent transcribed to everyone's email accounts.

Since my complaint (which was an argument during which the nurse who left the private information hung up on me), human resources and the office manager have contacted me to try to alleviate the tension, but I have received no apology from anyone for violating HIPAA or embarrassing me. Should I throw in the towel and find a new doctor or revoke my contact information from their files? I don't know how to proceed from here.

PERSONAL TO PUBLIC

DEAR PERSONAL: If you provided a shared phone number as your point of contact, you should not have blamed the person who left the message for using it. I see no reason to change doctors, but you should definitely alter your client information so this doesn't happen in the future.

That said, does your psychiatrist know one of his/her employees hung up on you? If not, the doctor should be informed, and you should be offered an apology.

DEAR ABBY: As guardians of our 5-year-old grandson, we have been given all rights, no terms. He has a father who is "on

again, off again" and makes zero financial contribution. I want to cut him off because consistency and effort are important to me, and he shows none.

My husband, on the other hand, says the boy is young, and I should give his father some time because contact once every other month is better than none at all. Our grandson enjoys him when he is here, but he doesn't miss him or ask for him once he's left. Should I allow this inconsistency and instability to continue?

PARENTS AGAIN IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR PARENTS AGAIN: I think your husband is right. While the father's presence may be sporadic, at least your grandson knows that he is cared about. As he grows older, he may or may not start asking why his dad isn't around more. Deal with it then. The boy's stability is coming from the home you and your husband are providing for him, and that should be your focus.

DEAR ABBY: I'm close to my brother and his wife. My friend "Dotty"—who is estranged from her husband—thinks my brother is hot, so when she sees him (without his wife) she greets him with a quick kiss on the lips. I have told her I don't think my sister-in-law would like it if she saw her do that.

Since then, Dotty has asked him to do repair work at her house (without pay) and he agreed because he is kindhearted.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

I told her subtly that I didn't think that was a good idea. Is her behavior toward married men normal?

TOO FRIENDLY IN HAWAII

DEAR TOO FRIENDLY: It is, for a woman who is friendly, outgoing and on the prowl. You may be dropping hints about what Dotty is doing to the wrong person. The next time you talk to your brother, tell HIM what you think about your friend's behavior, and ask him what he thinks his wife would think about it.

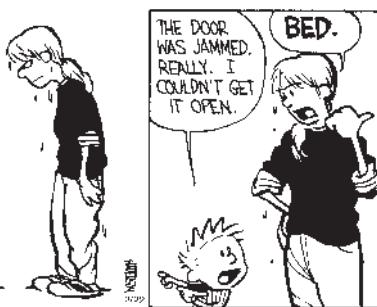
Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

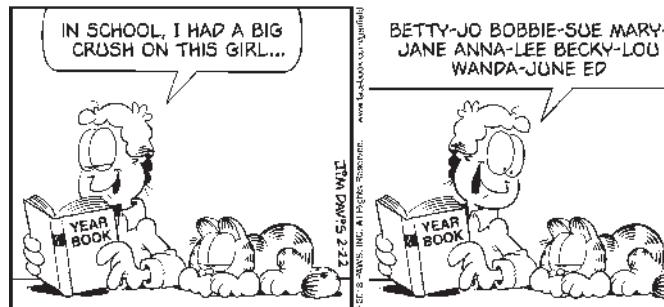


By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

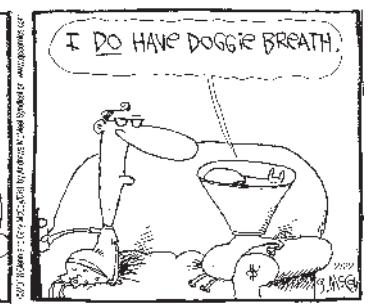


By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	34	Criminal, to cops	55	Oodles	22	Misgiving
1 Radiate	36	Last	56	Passel	23	Military group
5 Netting	37	(Abbr.)	24	iPhone download	24	Workout
9 Hotel	38	Roman	1	venues	25	Caviar
amenity	40	402	2	Cash advance	26	Wonderful
12 Meditative	38	Kingdom	3	Monster	27	Synagogue
practice	40	Bell or	4	Vacillates	29	"Exodus" hero
13 Canyon	41	Barker	5	"Alice" diner	30	Avril
come-back	42	Bizarre	6	Author Umberto	follower	Capita
14 Chest	43	Steam baths	7	Moo —	35	lead-in
muscle	47	"Bow-wow!"	8	pork	37	Bathtub
15 Wonderful	48	Wonderful	9	Egypt's Mubarak	39	seals
17 Allow	51	Japanese pond	10	Wonderful	40	Skilled
18 Derisive	52	fish	11	Actress Winslet	41	— de mer
looks	53	pond	12	10 Rind	42	Aftermath
19 Seasonal	54	fish	13	Winslet	43	Love god
songs			14	Performs	44	Beholds
21 Concerning			15	key	45	"Hud" Oscar
22 "Zorba the			16	recipe	46	winner
Greek" star			17	53 Actress	47	Pot starter
24 Sciences' partner			18	10 Rind	48	Leftovers
27 Day light			19	Winslet	49	recipe
28 Wax-coated cheese			20	11 Performs	50	Tic-tac-toe loser
31 "The Raven" writer						50 Wolf Blitzer's channel
32 "Bali —"						
33 Playwright Levin						

Solution time: 24 mins.



Yesterday's answer 2-22

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Drew Barrymore, 43; Thomas Jane, 49; Jeri Ryan, 50; Kyle MacLachlan, 59.

Happy Birthday: Do your best to get ahead. Believe in yourself and your abilities. Don't show anger when staying calm will get you where you want to go. A financial opportunity will develop from a kind gesture you offer or the input you give as a volunteer. Sign up for the causes that move you and you will make a difference. Your numbers are 7, 10, 19, 27, 33, 42, 49.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): An opportunity will arise if you have been patient and willing to listen to the powers that be. Don't let anger or opposition get to you. Stick to what you know and do best and listen to those offering positive change. **★★★**

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Opportunities will open up if you share your thoughts and feelings. Embrace the future with enthusiasm and with the purpose of striving for greater stability and security. Partnerships will bring out the best in you. **★★★**

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Dig deep and do your due diligence when dealing with peers, people who work in administrative positions, government agencies or institutions. A wrong move will turn into a learning experience that could end up being costly or ruin your reputation. **★★★**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A partnership will encourage you to try something new. Broadening your circle of friends will spark an interest in developing a skill you

haven't used for some time. Let your imagination help you find answers and solutions. **★★★★**

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Try not to overreact, spend when you shouldn't or take on too much. When you have a choice, remain moderate and don't get involved in something that will cause you stress or complicate your personal life. **★★**

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Short trips, networking, educational pursuits and meetings are all favored. Discuss your intentions with others and you'll be offered information that will help you fine-tune your plans. Refuse to let your personal life interfere with your professional goals. **★★★★★**

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Emotions will interfere with your train of thought. If you can't decipher what others think or want, it may be best to observe the reactions you get as you move toward your goal. Keeping the peace may not be possible. **★★★★★**

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Be careful if someone asks you to invest too much in something risky. Consider how much you need to spend and what you can do on your own. Don't let emotional situations lead to temptation. **★★★**

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Look for new opportunities or better ways to invest your money. Don't take a risk or let someone else handle your personal affairs. Stay focused on what's important to you and protect your possessions and assets. **★★★**

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Put more time and energy into getting ahead. Professional and personal goals are favored, and greater opportunities are heading your way. Someone from your past will encourage you to mix old and new ideas together. **★★★★★**



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll be tempted to sign up for something or book a trip you cannot afford. You'll be happy you took a pass and have money in the bank as the month comes to a close. Try to break bad habits and avoid poor influences. **★★**



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Follow through with your plans. Make changes that will benefit you as well as those you love. Step up and take over. Show your strength and courage and you will gain respect and ownership of whatever you pursue. **★★★★**

Birthday Baby: You are helpful, persistent and curious. You are open-minded and ambitious.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

8	3	2						
			4	9				
1					7			
	5	1	3	8				
2					7			
	5	1	3	8				
2		9			7			
	6	4	7	5				
1					5			

Difficulty Level ★★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

4	3	6	7	2	8	1	9	5
2	8	7	1	5	9	4	3	6
9	1	5	6	4	3	2	8	7
3	7	2	5	9	6	8	4	1
8	5	9	4	7	1	3	6	2
6	4	1	3	8	2	7	5	9
1	9	4	8	6	7	5	2	3
7	2	8	9	3	5	6	1	4
5	6	3	2	1	4	9	7	8

Difficulty Level ★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

ARE YOUR EYES REFULGENT?

G	B	B	D	I	C	U	L	I	G	H	T	I	N	
L	L	R	E	R	T	T	I	L	G	A	P	N	H	
E	U	I	I	A	H	Y	N	I	H	S	L	I	A	C
A	C	M	M	G	M	B	F	O	E	U	R	Z	R	A
M	E	N	I	M	H	I	R	U	F	A	E	E	B	A
I	Z	L	E	N	E	T	N	I	L	L	G	D	D	
N	A	G	B	C	O	R	T	G	L	G	A	I	I	E
G	L	N	L	L	Q	U	I	T	N	L	W	A	S	
L	B	I	A	U	A	N	S	N	G	I	I	N	N	C
A	A	L	M	E	S	Z	N	N	G	A	N	A	T	E
N	R	Z	B	U	L	T	I	I	E	L	W	I	N	N
C	D	Z	E	L	E	I	R	N	I	E	O	I	H	T
I	E	A	N	B	Y	C	M	O	G	R	R	S	N	S
N	N</													

CLASSIFIED ADS



EMPLOYMENT

(6) Landscaper and Grounds keeping worker, (4) Waiters and Waitress, (2) Truck Driver, (2) Administrative Assistant, (4) Cook, (4) Housekeeping Cleaner, (2) Massage Therapists, (2) Sewer and Tailors, (8) Maintenance and Repair Workers, (14) Houseworker, (2) Computer Support Specialist, (2) Accountant/ Bookkeeper, minimum wage. Mail resume to MTO Maintenance (Saipan), Inc. at P.O. Box 504053 Saipan, MP 96950

(1) Taekwondo Instructor, \$10.25/hr. (1) Administrative Assistant, minimum wage. Mail resume to Blue Dragon Martial Arts Corporation at P.O. Box 506310 Saipan, MP 96950

(3) Maintenance and Repair Worker, minimum wage. Mail resume to Elliott System, LLC at P.O. Box 5568 Saipan, MP 96950

(1) Operation Manager, \$9.75/hr and (3) Camera operators, Television, Video and Motion Picture, minimum wage. Mail resume to Saipan TV Productions PMB 272 Box 10000 Saipan MP, 96950

(4) Cook, minimum wage. Mail resume to Everest Kitchen Company PMB 1311 Box 10002 Saipan MP, 96950

(1) Accountant, (8) Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, (4) Auto Diesel Mechanic-minimum wage. (1) Sales Manager, \$7.25-\$10.33/hr(1) Trucking & Maintenance Manager, \$7.25 to \$8. Mail resume to Cargo Express (Saipan), inc. P.O. Box 506391 Saipan MP 96950.

2 Accountant/ Bookkeeper, minimum wage. Mail resume to Burger & Comer P.C. at P.O. Box 504053, Saipan, MP 96950

(1) Building and Ground Maintenance repairer. Extensive experience and references required. Contact Tapochau estates at 483-9351.

1 Commercial Cleaner, 1 General Maintenance - 3-5 years experience with valid driver's license. Police Clearance required. Email resume to BFJ Corporation at cisco.cnmi@yahoo.com

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

AGNES S.N.)
MAHATO) FCD-DI CIVIL
PETITIONER) ACTION NO.
) 18-0020
VS.)
CHANDRA) SUMMONS FOR
MANI MAHATO) PUBLICATION
)
Respondent,)

TO THE ABOVE RESPONDENT:
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after the service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 503346 Saipan MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 8th day of February, 2018.

/s/ Clerk of Court

Aquaville Incorporation
Need
(1) Commercial Diver
At least have
3 years experience in Diving
Contact Person: Adonis Santos
Contact No. 323-2916

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www.guam.wish.org

Saipan Tribune

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Vacancy Announcement
1-General Manager
2 years management experience. Professional Scuba Diving Instructor License preferred. Proficient in English & Japanese (reading, writing, speaking)

Interested U.S. applicants, may email resume to edwardcalvo@gmail.com

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP18-CHCC/CGC-005
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: MARCH 19, 2018 TIME: 9:00AM
"VEHICLE LEASE
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CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
/S/ PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S

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P.O. Box 501063 Saipan MP 96950
principal@saipansdaschool.org

Chanaphat N. & Nicolas Tkel
P.O. Box 506278 C.K.
Saipan, MP 96950
(670) 788-2833/287-4688

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
IN RETHE)
GUARDIANSHIP OF)
Nikita Nupatthiya Tkel,)
An Incompetent) 18-0064
by)
Chanaphat Nupatthiya)
Tkel and Nicolas Tkel)
Petitioner)

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardianship for the above-named by Chanaphat Nupatthiya Tkel and Nicolas Tkel, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court and is open for review at the office of the Clerk of the said Court in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at the CNMI Judiciary, before Judge Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio on the 19th day of March, 2018 at 9:00 A.M. in Courtroom 217A or as soon as thereafter.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
By: /s/
Deputy Clerk of Court

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 08-2018

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Closing date: March 09, 2018

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(1) Electrician (Saipan)
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(1) ARFF General Maintenance-I (Saipan)
(3) General Maintenance-I (Saipan)
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(1) Maintenance/Custodial Supervisor (Rota)
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Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old; original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office West Tinian International Airport or Benjamin T. Manglona Rota International Airport. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10 year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the West Tinian International Airport or Benjamin T. Manglona Rota International Airport is no later than 5:00 pm on March 09, 2018.

Detailed information on qualifications and position description for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except on holidays, at the CPA's Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the West Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin T. Manglona Rota International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or cpaboardsec@pticom.com by phone at (670) 237-6500.

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CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

WHATZIT Solution: The Three Bears

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Dolphins use franchise tag on Landry



MIAMI (AP)—
The Miami Dolphins decided receiver Jarvis Landry is worth any headaches he causes, even if the cost is \$16 million.

Landry was given a non-exclusive franchise tag Tuesday after leading the NFL with 112 catches in 2017. The move by the Dolphins came on the first day that teams could assign franchise tags.

The tag's value is expected to be about \$16 million. Landry made \$894,000 last season.

Landry has said he wanted to remain with the Dolphins, and they said they wanted him back. But his volatile personality has been cause for a concern -- especially on a team that went 6-10 last year in part because of poor discipline.

Landry was ejected in the fourth quarter of the season finale, a loss to Buffalo, and coach Adam Gase said the episode was embarrassing and "extremely bad." But Landry was by far the highest-profile Dolphins player eligible for free agency, and perhaps the best player on an offense that sputtered throughout 2017.

Miami still hopes to sign Landry to a multi-year deal, a person familiar with the team's plans said. The person didn't want to be identified because the Dolphins haven't publicly discussed contract negotiations with Landry.

Landry had a franchise-record 112 catches and a career-high nine touchdowns in 2017, the final season of the contract he signed before his rookie season. He has been selected to three consecutive Pro Bowls and has 400 career receptions, a record for a fourth-year player.

The non-exclusive tag allows Landry to sign an offer sheet with another team. The Dolphins could match that of-



AP
AFC wide receiver Jarvis Landry of the Miami Dolphins throws during Pro Bowl NFL football practice, Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2018 in Kissimmee, Fla.

Bears have decided to decline their option on Sitton for next season and release Freeman. The people spoke on the condition of anonymity because the team has not announced the moves.

A four-time Pro Bowl lineman, the 31-year-old Sitton spent the past two seasons in Chicago after an eight-year run with Green Bay. He signed with the Bears after the Packers released him just before the 2016 season. Sitton dealt with rib and ankle injuries last season and missed three games.

The 31-year-old Freeman suffered a season-ending pectoral injury in the opener last year and was suspended for violating the league's policy against performance-enhancing drugs in each of his two seasons with the Bears. The second violation resulted in a 10-game suspension in late October.

Freeman said on Twitter at the time that he also suffered a potentially career-ending concussion in the opener, providing context to the drug violation. He said he downplayed the severity of his head injury to family and friends.

Freeman led Chicago with 110 tackles in 2016 despite serving a four-game suspension for his first violation. He played for Indianapolis from 2012-15.

The Bears went 5-11 last season and finished last in the NFC North for the fourth straight year. Chicago fired coach John Fox and replaced him with Matt Nagy.

NFL Network first reported the Bears are declining Sitton's option, while Pro Football Talk was first with the news on Freeman.

Luck tells Indy fans he feels better, rules out more surgery

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Andrew Luck delivered some good news to Indianapolis Colts fans on Tuesday. He feels better. He ruled out additional surgery. And he's eager to play football after spending the last 13 months rehabbing from shoulder surgery. If all goes well, the three-time Pro Bowl quarterback might even return in time for the start of April's offseason workouts.

Colts season-ticket holders couldn't have asked for a better town hall meeting. "That is not an option for me," Luck said when Sports Illustrated reporter Peter King asked during a pre-taped interview if he might need more surgery. "Right now, that ship

has sailed in my mind, which is also a bit of a relief. I'm not going to lie."

The answer drew loud applause from a nearly packed house.

Still, skepticism is understandable after the turns and twists of last season.

Luck had surgery for a partially torn labrum in January 2017. He, general manager Chris Ballard and then coach Chuck Pagano all spent months optimistically talking about Luck's long-awaited return, only to watch the process continue to drag on.

Team owner Jim Irsay joined the chorus in August, suggesting Luck would return to game action in September.

But things didn't work out

as anticipated. Chicago Bears are parting with veteran guard Josh Sitton and linebacker Jerrell Freeman.

Two people familiar with the situation said Tuesday the

about the shoulder since Dec. 29, so the fact he's talking now could be a promising sign even though a throwing timeline remains unclear.

"I'm in the middle of a little bit of throwing," Luck explained without saying whether he was using a football or another object. "But I'm really preparing and strengthening the shoulder to handle the throwing load of an NFL quarterback, to make sure the shoulder can handle it."

A healthy Luck, the No. 3 pick in the upcoming draft and tens of millions of dollars in salary-cap space presumably could have made Indy's coaching vacancy the most attractive opening this offseason.

3-team trade sends Drury to Yankees, Souza to Diamondbacks



S C O T T S -
DALE, Ariz.
(AP)—The

Arizona Diamondbacks sent infielder Brandon Drury to the New York Yankees and received outfielder Steven Souza Jr. from the Tampa Bay Rays in a three-team trade Tuesday that included five players plus two to be named later.

The deal was announced one day after former Diamondbacks slugger J.D. Martinez agreed to a \$110 million, five-year contract with Boston, pending a physical. Arizona has moved quickly to fill that hole in the outfield, signing speedy Jarrod Dyson to a \$7.5 million, two-year

contract on Monday before trading for Souza.

Souza will be the starter at one corner outfield position, with Dyson subbing at all three spots.

Drury gives the Yankees a new option at third base or second base, where New York was projected to start a pair of rookies.

Top pitching prospect Anthony Banda goes from Arizona to the Rays, who also get minor league second baseman Nick Solak from the Yankees and two players to be named from the Diamondbacks. Minor league right-hander Taylor Widener moves from New York to Arizona.

Drury played mostly second base for Arizona but came up

through the minors as a third baseman and could fill that spot for the Yankees, who have top prospect Gleyber Torres penciled in at second. Another prospect, Miguel Andujar, was a leading candidate at third.

New York traded All-Star second baseman Starlin Castro to Miami this offseason in the blockbuster deal for slugger Giancarlo Stanton. Chase Headley was sent to San Diego in a cost-cutting swap, and fellow third baseman Todd Frazier signed with the cross-town Mets as a free agent.

The 25-year-old Drury also has experience in the corner outfield spots, but the Yankees

are well stocked there.

Souza helps fill a power void in Arizona's outfield created by Martinez's departure. Martinez had 29 home runs and 65 RBI in 62 games with Arizona last season after being acquired from Detroit, but the Diamondbacks knew it was a long shot they'd be able to afford to retain him.

Drury hit .267 with 13 home runs and 63 RBI in 135 games for Arizona last season. To make room for him on the 40-man roster, the Yankees designated outfielder Jabari Blash for assignment.

Souza, 28, batted .239 with a career-high 30 home runs and 78 RBI last year. He had

a .351 on-base percentage and .810 OPS.

Drury was the odd man out in a crowded middle infield for Arizona. Chris Owings or Ketel Marte could shift to second from shortstop, where Nick Ahmed also is back from injury. Daniel Descalso can play all the infield positions, plus the outfield.

Drury came to Arizona from Atlanta as part of the Justin Upton trade in 2013 and worked his way up through the Diamondbacks' minor league system. He isn't eligible for arbitration until next year.

Banda, 24, made his major league debut last season, going 2/3 with a 5.96 ERA in

eight appearances, four starts. The left-hander was 8-7 with a 5.39 ERA in 22 starts for Triple-A Reno last year.

The 23-year-old Solak split last season between Class A Tampa and Double-A Trenton, batting .297 with 12 homers and 53 RBI.

Widener, 23, will be a non-roster invitee to Diamondbacks spring training. He was 7-8 with a 3.39 ERA in 21 starts for Class A Tampa last season and advanced to Double-A Trenton, where he was 1-0 with a 3.00 ERA in two relief appearances. He threw the final five innings of a no-hitter against Binghamton on Sept. 8.

Cavs, Warriors ready for sprint to finish



CLEVELAND (AP)—LeBron James had a trophy in his hands and a smile on his face.

That was Sunday at the All-Star Game, when James again rose above the NBA's best in winning a game and MVP honors.

What he really wants is to be celebrating in the postseason, not midseason.

The NBA's sprint to the finish begins Thursday with James riding high but starting again from back in the pack as Cleveland tries to catch Toronto and Boston in the Eastern Conference.

"We just added four new guys before the break, and we have a lot of work to do," James said. "So I really don't like to think that too far ahead. But obviously winning championships is what it's all about. That's what this league is all about and hopefully at the end of the road then I have the Cavs there to actually compete for one, to be in a



AP
Team LeBron's LeBron James, second from left, of the Cleveland Cavaliers shoots as Team Stephen's Draymond Green, left, Klay Thompson, second from right, and Stephen Curry of the Golden State Warriors, defend during the first half of an NBA All-Star basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 18, 2018, in Los Angeles.

Blazers hope for another post-All-Star break revival

PORTRLAND, Ore. (AP)—The Trail Blazers have enjoyed post-All-Star break revivals the past two seasons.

Those late-season rallies will no doubt be an ongoing theme in the congested Western Conference playoff race once Portland resumes play on Friday in Utah.

"I mean, I think that's in the back of our minds. We know that we're usually a better team in the second half of the season," Portland guard Damian Lillard said. "We can't just go into it saying, 'All right, we're always good at this part of the season.' I think mentally we have to understand how close of a race it is and that we've got to be sharp all the way through."

Portland is 32-26 at the break, tied for sixth in the West, which is better off than it was last season at the same point.

But the Blazers are one of five teams in the West with 26 losses. The Warriors and Houston Rockets sit comfortably atop the standings with the next eight teams jostling for position.

The Blazers headed into the All-Star Game with a 123-117 victory over Golden State, snapping a seven-game losing streak to the Warriors. Lillard had 44 points, his third straight game with 39 or more and the best scoring stretch of his career. His 133 points over the last three games is the best such run in

franchise history.

Afterward, Lillard sounded like he was taking it upon himself to improve the Blazers' playoff position.

"Each season, it's always a few teams that fall by the wayside and we've just got to make sure we're not one of them," he said. "As a leader, I've got to be the guy to lead that charge."

In 2015-16, Portland was 27-27 at the All-Star break after winning eight of nine games going into it. The Blazers finished the regular season 44-38 and in fifth place in the West. They got past the Clippers in the first round of the playoffs before falling to the Warriors in the conference semifinals.

Last season, Portland lost three straight games to go into the break at 23-33. Shortly thereafter, an overtime loss at Detroit put them 11 games under .500.

But in March, Portland caught fire and went 13-3, best in the NBA. Lillard was named the conference's Player of the Month, averaging 29.1 points, 4.4 rebounds, 6.0 assists and 1.4 steals in 16 games. Terry Stotts was named Coach of the Month.

Center Jusuf Nurkic, who came to Portland in a trade a handful of days before the All-Star break, went on to average 15.2 points, 10.4 rebounds and 1.9 blocks in 20 games with the Blazers. Portland was 14-5 with the 7-footer in the starting lineup.

finals representing the East."

The Golden State Warriors are also in the unusual position of pursuers, after red-hot Houston passed them for the league's best record with 10 straight wins leading into the All-Star break. But nobody would count out the Warriors, not with their star-studded group that has won two of the last three titles.

Cleveland is the unknown, even with James. The Cavaliers added new pieces around him earlier this month, and there's not a lot of time left to build championship chemistry.

The Cavs went into the break with four straight wins, but they're still just third in the conference and couldn't gain any ground on the Raptors, who have won seven straight to pass the Celtics.

It's a two-team race at the top of the West but things are tight well beyond that. San Antonio is just percentage points ahead of Minnesota for third while still hoping Kawhi Leonard returns from his

Toronto is an NBA-best 24-4 at home and could make the Cavs' NBA Finals plans difficult if they have to go through Canada.

"We would hope so, but we've got to get there," Raptors All-Star guard Kyle Lowry said. "We've got to finish the season strong."

Much of the work is already done, since the NBA's earlier start to this season means teams are well beyond the midway point of their schedules. They will have about 25 games remaining, with so much to sort out in both conferences.

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points ahead of Minnesota for third while still hoping Kawhi Leonard returns from his

thigh injury, and it's a gap of only 4 1/2 games from there to 10th place, where the Utah Jazz have won 11 straight.

The East has a close race for fourth place and home-court advantage in the first round between Washington and Indiana, and positioning to be settled down the bottom of the bracket, where Milwaukee, Philadelphia and Miami hold the final three spots.

But the biggest question might be the Celtics, who slumped into the break with three straight losses after leading the conference most of the season, and now have one team ahead of them and another behind that has the momentum.

"The Raptors have been playing really well. Cleveland has been playing really well. But we've got to get

back to playing really well, too," the Celtics' Jaylen Brown said. "So as the season moves forward, we're looking forward to getting back to the top spot."

Same with the Warriors, who were hurt by the longer-than-usual time it took to reach the break. They were just 6-4 in their last 10 games and at 44-14 already have more losses than they averaged over the last three seasons (13).

Coach Steve Kerr made it clear that his team needed a rest and now that the Warriors had it, they're ready to try to reel in the Rockets.

"We've got 20-something games before the playoffs to chase another championship," All-Star Stephen Curry said. "So, ready to hit the ground running when we get back."

Woods, Stricker to be vice captains at Ryder Cup

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (AP)—Tiger Woods will be in France this year for the Ryder Cup as a vice captain.

Still to be determined is whether he gets to play.

U.S. captain Jim Furyk appointed Woods and Steve Stricker as two more of his vice captains for the Sept. 28-30 matches at Le Golf National. Furyk previously selected two-time Ryder Cup captain Davis Love III to assist him.

Woods has said he'd like to play and be a vice captain. Furyk hasn't ruled that out. He will have five assistants with him at the Ryder Cup, and there are only four matches on the course at any time until Sunday singles.

"It's possible," Furyk said Tuesday. "Whether that's

the best thing for the team, we'll see."

Woods is returning from

a fourth back surgery that has limited his golf to just 19 tournaments since the first of those surgeries a week before the 2014 Masters. He last played in the Ryder Cup in 2012 at Medinah, where he went 0-3-1.

Woods was a vice captain at Hazeltine for the 2016 Ryder Cup, when the Americans beat Europe for the first time in eight years. He also was an assistant at the Presidents Cup last fall. Players and other assistants have described him as being heavily involved.

Stricker, the Presidents Cup captain last year, will be a vice



captain in the third straight Ryder Cup.

Woods has a 13-17-3 record in his seven appearances as a player in the Ryder Cup. He has played on only one winning team, in 1999 at The Country Club in Brookline, Massachusetts. He was a captain's pick only in Wales in 2010.

"I want to do what's best for Tiger and I want to do what's best for the team, and that would be a bridge we cross when we got there," Furyk said. "If he could be valuable as a player, I'm sure we would want him playing on this team. But there's so much time to go."

Woods tied for 23rd last month at Torrey Pines, and

then missed the cut last week at Riviera. He is playing the Honda Classic this week, and likely has one more start at Bay Hill ahead of the Masters. He is No. 544 in the world ranking and not eligible for World Golf Championships, which offer higher Ryder Cup points.

"I think the good news-bad news for someone like Tiger Woods is: He's played what? Three or four events? And we're already talking Ryder Cup," Furyk said. "That's the nature of being Tiger Woods and obviously being one of the greatest players or the greatest player of all time. I'm anxious to see how he plays, so see how things go and we'll do what's best for him and the team."

Shirley's Coffee Shop takes last semis seat

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Shirley's Coffee Shop advanced to the semifinals of the 2017 Tan Holdings Inter-Company Basketball League after winning the tiebreak against POI Aviation.

POI and Shirley's finished the double-round robin elimination with similar 4-6 records to place behind early semis qualifiers Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan (10-0), Kanoa (7-3), and *Saipan Tribune* (5-5).

To break the tie and decide the winner of the fourth and last semis berth, league organizers implemented a point system, dividing the total points scored by total points allowed.

With Shirley's winning the tiebreak and the last semis ticket that went with the victory, the squad earned the right to challenge unbeaten Fiesta in the first Final Four game tomorrow. *Saipan Tribune* and Kanoa will play in the second semis match.

Kanoa will enter the semis tiff coming off a tough 60-55 win over the Lower Base Warriors.

The second-ranked squad played without main gunner Douglas Schmidt, leaving Dindo Pablo the task to carry



The last game in the elimination round proved to be a crucial factor in Shirley's and POI's semis chances. Both teams dropped their matches last Friday, but Shirley's fell behind by only 5 points against Fiesta Resort (70-65), while POI lost to *Saipan Tribune* by 11, 47-58.

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Kanoa Resort 60 — Pablo

30, Sison 9, Bustillo 7, Encarnacion 7, Lumauag 5, De Arroz 2.

Lower Base 56 — Jinang 18, Riungel 13, Fujihira 10, W. Benavente 5, J. Benavente

4, Kenty 4, Alegre 2.

Scoring by halves: 32-36, 60-56.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Shirley's Coffee Shop's John Jugos, right, drives against POI Aviation's Lawrence Deleon Guerrero during their second round game in the 2017 Tan Holdings Inter-Company Basketball League at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Basketball leagues meeting Friday

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Organizers of the Francisco M. Diaz Memorial Youth League and the 2018 Men's and Women's Island-wide Premier Basketball League are calling all coaches to attend tomorrow's meeting at 5:30pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room.

The meeting will discuss the opening of both leagues and other important issues.

The FMD Memorial Youth League is for Under 15 and U18 boys, while the IPBL is an open division. The leagues have attracted a combined 31 teams.



Eight teams have signed up for the FMD's U15 division with 670 Sonics and NMI Rollers fielding two each. The Young Warriors, Ol'Aces Extreme, Ol'Aces Elite, and Tinian are the other squads competing in the youth league.

The Warriors and Rollers have entered two teams each in the U18 division, while the Sonics have three and the three groups will be joined by the Kagman Sparks, Ol'Aces, Ol'Aces Elite, Ol'Aces Extreme, Tinian, and the China Town Titans.

Six teams will be vying for the IPBL men's title, while

four have signed up in the women's division.

Imperial Pacific has two men's squads and they will be playing against the Ol'Aces, Ol'Aces Elite, Dream Team, and a team coached by Alex Lauron. The Lady Ol'Aces, Ol'Aces, Docomo Warriors, and a team led by Irish Pagarao and Madi Alegre are in the women's side.

For more information, call Marianas International Basketball Federation developmental officer Elias Rangamar at 234-6672 or email eli_rang@yahoo.com or ejrangamar@gmail.com.

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other hand, went down to 12 from 19 who took part in the four tryout sessions. The 12 on-island players are joined by seven others, who are overseas. The 19 players will also fight for the 12 slots on the squad.

Sisters Eilena Santos and Annalei Santos, Cassandra Camacho, Irish Pagarao, Aliyah Fernandez, Tazna Deleon Guerrero, Connie Camacho, Liamwar Rangamar, Madalene Alegre, Desrei Cam-

cho, Halle Kenty, and Jacque Wonenberg are the players on Saipan included on the initial list. Completing the preliminary roster are off-island players Jamie Mendoza, Rachel Abrams, Glorily Williams, Teresita Sablan, Ira Palero, Jan Travilla, and Marie Javier.

Rangamar said he decided to increase the number of players for the first cut to have a bigger pool of athletes to choose from.

"It was a tough decision to make since there are a lot of good players. But, I have

to make the cut. We're going to work on some strength and conditioning, and skills development like passing in the next two weeks. I will be making the final cut after that and will announce who made it to the national team on March 23," Rangamar told *Saipan Tribune*.

Both squads will have their first training session this Saturday with the women's crew taking the court first from 11am to 1pm and the men's doing drills from 1:30pm to 4pm.

out Kimo Angailen.

Bradley Lieto's five RBIs for the Falcons included a two-RBI single at the top of the seventh when the game was getting out of the Blue Jays' reach. He also made it to home plate four times on a 2-for-4 batting.

Meanwhile, GSM was looking for its second straight win last night as it played against Outlaws, while SBL action will resume on Monday. No matches will be played tonight and tomorrow to give way to a visiting South Korean baseball team that will be using the field for practice and scrimmage.

Belau Masters softball league meeting



The Belau Masters Softball League will be having a meeting at 6pm on Monday, Feb. 26, at the Minatchom Attdao pavilion in Susupe.

The meeting will discuss the upcoming league for players 40 years old and up. The

league is set to open on March 11 at 11am at the Dandan Softball Field. Teams and players interested in joining the league are advised to attend the meeting. Entrance fee is \$450.

For more information, call Peoris "Perry" Besong at 483-5438.

Last year, Brotherhood

won its third straight Masters title after beating Peleliu in a best-of-three title series. Julian Camacho smacked a walk-off homerun to lift Brotherhood to a 23-21 win against the top ranked and pennant champion Peleliu in Game 2. Brotherhood defeated Peleliu in the finals opener, 42-11. *(Jon Perez)*

Fake Madrid played even better and this time Kaden Church starred for the undefeated squad after hitting four goals. Rintaro Miyawaki and Katrina Costales added two, while Joyce made one more.

In other results, top-ranked Bruv fended off ABCD FC in the second half for a 5-2 victory.

The Bruv-ABCD FC semis tiff in the co-ed U18 division was tied at the break with the former drawing its lone goal from John Michael Rojas and the latter from Dai Podziewski. Then after a so-so offense

in the first half, Bruv got its rhythm in the second with Gillian Villagomez knocking in a pair and Guine Borja and Mareko Tekopua contributing one each. ABCD FC, on the other hand, still struggled with only Krizel Tuazon scoring in the second half.

With the win, Bruv earned the first finals berth and will face the winner of Suplex City-CTSI Petmalu semis game in the championship match tomorrow. The Kensington-backed Suplex City and CTSI Petmalu will battle for the last finals slot tonight at 7:30pm.

FALCONS

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effort for starter Henry Reyes. He was also walked twice, went 3-for-4 at the plate, and scored five times—three of which were on RBI singles by his cousin Bradley.

J.J. Lifoifoi closed out for the Falcons and had a quick 1-2-3 inning in the sixth before giving manager Doru Camacho some anxious moments in the seventh. He gave up a leadoff walk to Greg Sablan and a single to Lorenzo Sibetang to put two runners on base. A wild pitch had both runners advancing, but Li-

foifoi bounced back when he struck out Kier Agda. Sablan scored on a Chris George RBI single, while Sibetang moved to third and later stole home for the Blue Jays' second run.

Lifoifoi then retired Neldreyton Skerei to move closer to ending the game by way of the 10-run rule, but he walked Noel Cabrera and designated hitter Mark Toves had an RBI single to bring in George. Cabrera moved 90 feet away from home plate, while Toves advanced to second on a passed ball to keep the Jays' comeback bid alive. Lifoifoi, however, ended their plans when he struck

2018 Coconut Tennis Classic

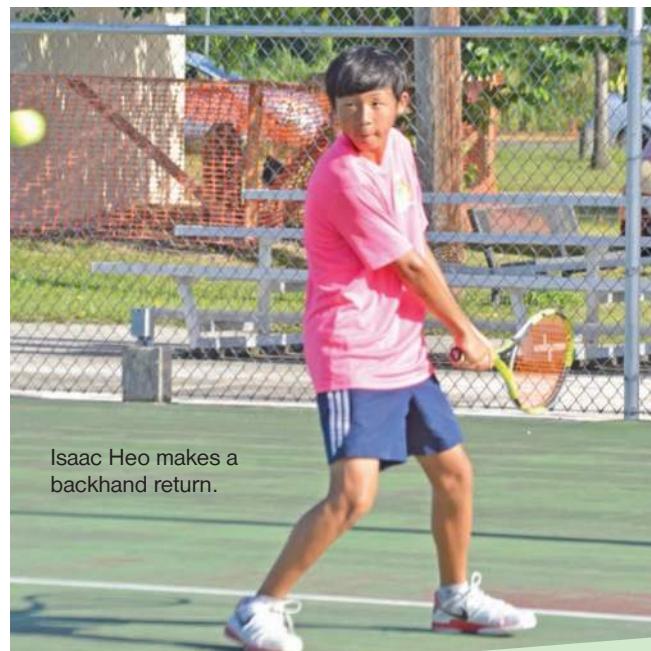
PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Juncheol Hwang eyes his target during his and Jeff Race's mixed up doubles game against Vincent Tudela and Nason Wessel in the 2018 Coconut Tennis Classic held this month at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.



Nason Wessel chases the ball at the corner.



Isaac Heo makes a backhand return.



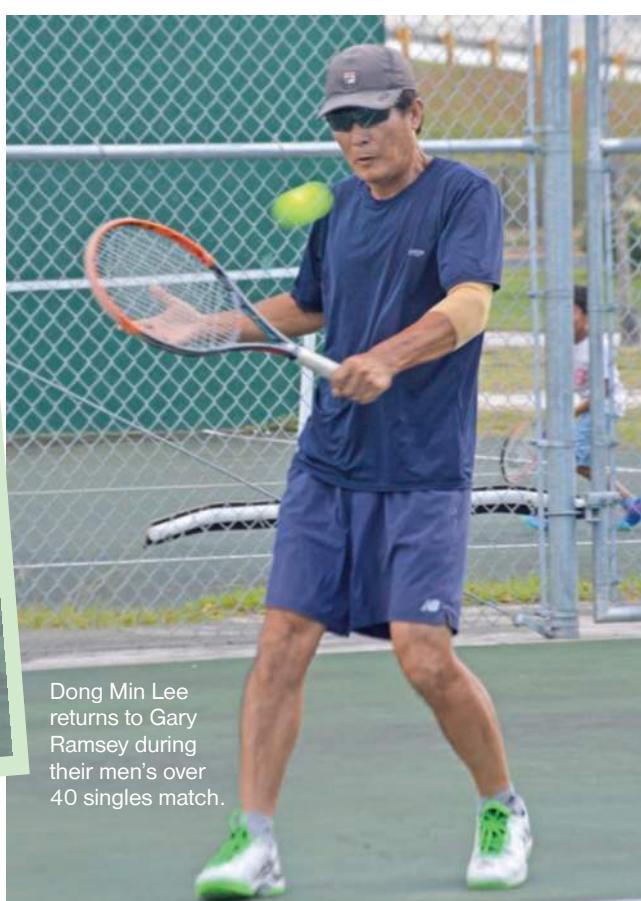
Sean Lee prepares to serve.



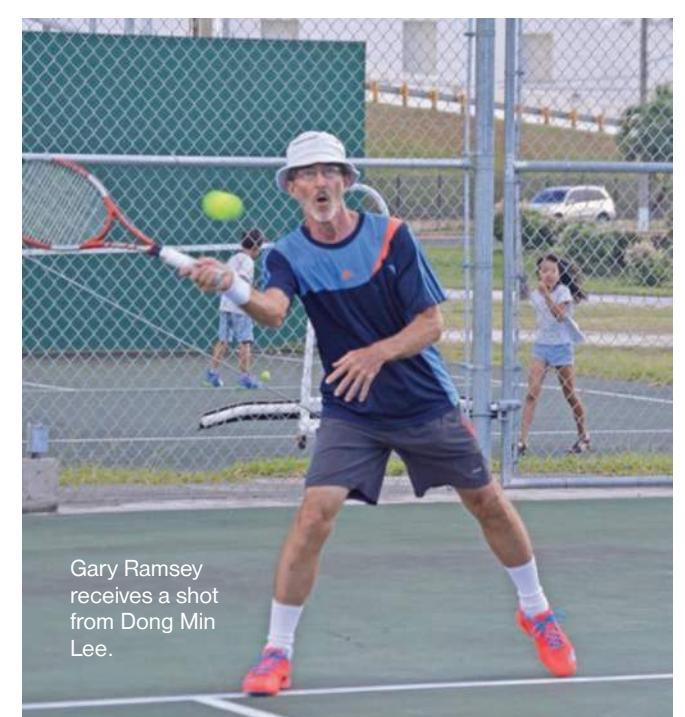
Tania Tan attempts a backhand return.



Robbie Schorr returns the ball during his and J.C. Ferrer's semis game against Jeff Race and Juncheol Hwang.



Dong Min Lee returns to Gary Ramsey during their men's over 40 singles match.



Gary Ramsey receives a shot from Dong Min Lee.



Dolphins use
franchise tag
on Landry

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Cavs, Warriors
ready for sprint
to finish

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Betde, Fake Madrid enter finals



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Betde player controls the ball, while a Tinsel Toes defender stays close to him during their earlier game in the co-ed U12 division of Saipan Soccer School's 2018 Youth Futsal Tournament at the TSL Sports Complex.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Fake Madrid and Betde eased their way to the finals after dominating their respective opponents at the start of the playoff round of Saipan Soccer School's 2018 Youth Futsal Tournament last Tuesday night at the TSL Sports Complex.

Betde took the first finals seat in the co-ed U12 division following an 11-1 demolition of Kanoa Ali'i, while Fake Madrid marched into the title game in the co-ed U15 age group after clobbering Marianas United, 16-0.

Betde had too many options on offense and much-experienced players that it was hard for the unseasoned Kanoa Ali'i crew to keep up with their heavily favored foes. With Betde having the edge in their semis duel, it jumped to a 7-0 lead in the first half and never looked back to cruise to victory.

Mark Costales led Betde's strong start, as he scored a

pair of goals, while Kaitlyn Chavez, Wataru Kadokura, Anthony Austria, Mark Roque, and Julie Capayas added one each. Kadokura and Roque then completed a hat trick in the second half, as they each added two more goals to Betde's total.

Kanoa Ali'i's lone goal came from Tyler Omelau and with the loss, the team will just play in the consolation game tomorrow against the loser of the Tinsel Toes-CTSI Petmalu semis tiff. Tinsel Toes and CTSI Petmalu will dispute the last finals berth today at 5:30pm and the winner will challenge Betde in the one-game title showdown tomorrow.

See BETDE on Page 26

Falcons soar past Blue Jays

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Peter Lieto pitched five innings in relief and cousin Bradley Lieto drove in five runs, as the Falcons soared past the Blue Jays, 21-9, in last Tuesday night's game in the 2018 Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.



The win was the second in as many games for last year's finalists and gave them the ear-

ly lead after almost two weeks of action. The victory came after the Falcons defeated the reigning titlists Aces on opening day, 10-8, while the loss prevented the Blue Jays from making a follow-up on their 13-2 season-debut win over the Outlaws last week.

Peter Lieto struck out six and had two walks while giving up five runs—three earned—on five hits in a relief

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JON PEREZ
A Falcons batter waits for the throw of Blue Jays pitcher Keoni Pua during their game in the 2018 Saipan Baseball League last Tuesday night at the Francisco M. Palacios Ballfield.

36 make first cut for NMI cage teams

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

A mix of veterans and rookies made the first cut for the CNMI national men's and women's basketball teams that will compete in the 2018 Micronesian Games in Yap.

The initial list of 36 players (17 men and 19 women) was released after Mariana Is-

lands Basketball Federation development officer Elias Rangamar conducted a series of tryouts this month at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

He trimmed the men's side to 16 from the more than 30 that showed up in the trials, including five from Rota. The preliminary



roster also includes one player who is currently in the mainland. The 17 players will vie for the 12 slots on the CNMI men's national team.

Prince Factor, Dean Blake, Coby Santos, Cheonsu Kim, Douglas Schmidt Jr., Jeff Deleon Guerrero, Kelvin Fitial, Preston Basa, Sean Rabasto,

Ben Lisua, Jack Aranda, Marvin Rabauliman, Aifer-son Atan, Jack Lizama Jr., Danandro Barcinas, and Gino Libuw made the first cut for the men's team. Christian Mizer is the only off-island player being considered on the squad.

The women's pool, on the See 36 on Page 26



JON PEREZ
Elias Rangamar, right, gives some instructions to players before letting them do drills and other exercises during a tryout for the CNMI men's national team last Feb. 10 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.